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PARISIAN SIGHTS
AND
FRENCH PRINCIPLES,
SEEN THROUGH
AMERICAN SPECTACLES.

BY
JAMES JACKSON JARVES.

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P R E F A C E.

“Simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitæ.”

OF volume first, a reviewer kindly said, “It is not half long enough, and we hope the author, in due time, will give us more of the same sort.” Having laid this flattering unction to my—pen, for further particulars, discriminating critic, inquire WITHIN. We would add, however, that a number of the chapters have already appeared at various intervals in *Harper’s Magazine*, while all were written some years back.

PARISIAN SIGHTS

AND

FRENCH PRINCIPLES.

CHAPTER I.

FRENCH ARISTOCRACY *vs.* AMERICAN DEMOCRACY.

ALL men are born free and equal, says the American Constitution. All men are born in the bondage of sin, says higher and truer authority. From that bondage spring those inequalities of life, which no axiom of politics can make level, or theory of philosophy make straight. It is useless to deny this truth. Nature proclaims it in every form, animate and inanimate. What contrast can be greater than between the humble but useful carbon and the brilliant and imperishable diamond! Yet both are of the same material. Every flower, shrub, and tree differs from its neighbor, each betraying some peculiar excellence, or the effects of disease or decay, the sad heritage of man's fall from freedom and equality. The brute kingdom alike shares man's destiny. Some animals there are born to beauty, health, and vigor; others to homeliness, infirmity, and suffering. The sole equality to man or beast is in the provision provided for entering or leaving this world, and the sole inheritance of indeprivable freedom is in the common air all breathe, and the mother earth

on which all tread while living, and repose in when dead. Whatever may have been the condition of our race previous to Eve's unwise curiosity, it has since become one of kaleidoscopic inequality, with joy for the few and sorrow for the many. The last owe her boundless gratitude that she stopped half way, and did not complete her sin by eating of the tree of life and compelling her descendants to live forever. In leaving the boon of death to humanity, we are in duty bound to forgive the fatal gift of knowledge. Yet, while humanity retains its corruptibility, this very inequality of natural and acquired condition constitutes the basis of progress and happiness. We could no more endure a dead level of comfort or pleasure than universal and equalized misery. Without contrasts and variety, life would lose its compensations. Consolation and stimulus both spring from diversities of fortune, and if there were no sorrow of mind, no pain of body, we should remain unacquainted with hope, and strangers to the gayety of health. Even heaven itself, the proffered climax of spiritual blessings, the eternal sea of joy and rest, destined to wash out all stains of earth, comes to us as a heaven of ranks, and powers, and diversities of every grade of glory and condition. We have the throng of the redeemed—the blood-washed and white-clad democracy of humanity, shouting hosannas at the foot of the throne, while angels and arch-angels, cherubim and seraphim, of every degree of power and eloquence, form the gradation of heaven's aristocracy, uniting in one harmonious choir of praise the souls of just men made perfect with those spirits who have had through eternity their home in Paradise. The title of the heavenly Ruler is "Father"—his law, "love"—and his regent is called "Lamb." Contrast this with the "imperial majesty"—the bulls, ukases, codes, bayonets, and executioners of earthly potentates, and credit the difference to the account of that spirit to whose

envy and ambition even the happiness of heaven proved no antidote.

Stop! It is of earth only that I would treat. The topic that gave rise to the above exordium is aristocracy—American aristocracy—republicanized, democratized aristocracy. In this land of the “people” the word aristocracy is in every mouth, sometimes in tones of envy, rarely of hate, but always of interest. What is this subtle something, that every one sees, yet none can define—this always sought, yet always vilified distinction—ever pursued and never grasped? Like an *ignis fatuus*, it dances its mocking light over the length and breadth of our land, oftenest seen and chased in the morasses of ignorance and prejudice, equally admired and abused, and not a little girt around by a superstitious dread, as natural as that entertained for its prototype, which many consider to be nothing less than a wandering spirit burning blue with anguish.

A democrat is a common noun; as easily understood in its length and breadth, depth and height, solid contents and superficial area, as any other son of a woman. He is one of the people. He believes in himself, and rightly, as a ruler, and a maker of rulers—as one of God’s anointed. He extends his faith to every man not a “nigger.” His freedom and equality consist in shaking up in the big sieve of politics blue spirits, white and gray. The adroit and able rise to the top and rule; the indifferent or weak sink to the bottom and are ruled. All have their turn, and democracy rejoices in healthful fruit over the length and breadth of its wide-spreading domain. Now, as each citizen of these United States is one of the people, and as the people rule themselves theoretically and practically, whence are our aristocrats? If we have such a class, they must have sprung from democrats—the decayed fruit of a healthful stock.

But it is no easy matter to put one's finger on an aristocrat in this country—at least, such is my experience. I have sought diligently so to do, but the nimble flea disappears not more rapidly than does one of this class when you think you have him. There is no difficulty in defining an aristocrat cast in the olden Grecian or Roman mould. The lords of Athens could never have been confounded with their white slaves. To be a citizen of Minerva's city was to be a nobleman, an aristocrat by birth and profession, as all men are born democrats with us. Lycurgus divided his community into two classes: the helots or workers, the democracy of Lacedæmon; and the citizens or fighters, to whom were reserved all honors and emoluments. The lordly patricians of republican Rome farmed out the world for their individual profit, while the plebeian multitude alternately fought for and were fed by them. There is no mistaking the class that produced an Alcibiades, Pericles, Tarquin, Crassus, or Sylla for the common clay of their epochs. They stood out from the mass in as distinct relief in power, wealth, intellect, lust, and ambition, as did Milton's Satan from the hosts of hell. They were aristocrats, conspicuous in talent, energy, or crime. Men who could sup like Lucullus, feed their lampreys on human flesh, drink dissolved pearls, or, like Bestia, find amusement in strangling wives while asleep, buy an empire or slaughter their fellow-citizens by scores to make a Roman holiday, would find small compensation for the deprivation of their privileges in the law-respecting and God-fearing lives of our aristocratic John Smiths and Richard Does. The ruder recreations of their craft in the Middle Ages, butchering and plundering travelers—when not occupied in wassail, or breaking each other's heads—would be too vulgar for the later Roman, accustomed to Asiatic luxury and Sybaritic indulgence; while even he, perhaps, would have scorned the effeminacy of the French no-

blesse of Louis XV., who, when visiting their country estates, kept the democracy up all night beating the neighboring ponds to prevent the croaking of frogs from disturbing their slumbers.

In using the words democrat and aristocrat, I employ them rather in their social than political signification. Aristocracy, as a form of government, is as obsolete in the United States as is true Christianity at Rome or democracy in Russia. Indeed, there is hope for the revival of the people's reign and religion in these countries, but none whatever for the hereditary rule of the favored few in America. Aristocracy, as a political system, is there more securely buried under the weight of state constitutions and popular intelligence, than if it had all Egypt's pyramids on its body, or the guillotine of 1793 to "off with its head." If it exist at all, it is in an intangible, fluctuating social shape, better defined as a sliding scale of gentility, without boundaries of caste, and only to be detected in the seeker's imagination by its greater or less distance from his, or, more commonly, her—as females oftenest sit in judgment on this tribunal—standard of domestic life.

Yet how often and how strangely do we hear this much-abused word used! In politics it is made a local war-cry, stimulating prejudice and ignorance against property and refinement, creating phantoms of inequality where none exist save those created and blessed by God himself—the successful issues of probity, intelligence, or enterprise, the very rewards free to all who labor in earnest, and for which none other land but this proffers a clear field. Every party must, however, parade its Guy Fawkes, and exercise its lungs in shouting stratagems and treasons. Like gunpowder in salutes, it serves to make a temporary noise and smoke, but the atmosphere soon clears, and leaves the prospect as bright as ever.

In Russia and England of this century we see represented the two phases of aristocracy as modified by Christianity,

which have respectively descended from Rome and Athens. In Russia, serfage in its lowest and most laborious forms, separated by the impassable gulfs of work and non-work, form nobility. Here the mass, under stripes and abuse, transmute the sweat of their brows into gold, that the few may bask in the sunshine of lordly magnificence. Born to masters, they know no higher destiny, and repay in servility and hypocrisy the tyranny and selfishness of their owners. It is aristocracy in its simplest, rudest, grandest form, alternately dazzling and disgusting in its extremes, because it knows no medium.

In Great Britain it is no less a portion of the state, and incorporated with the religion of the land. England's rule is aristocratic, but it is the best development of aristocracy of which human nature is capable. Extremes of social position as great as those of Russia are to be found in England, but education and intelligence have fixed limits to power. The same system which has developed liberty in England and given birth to democracy in America, has produced a race of high-minded, large-hearted men and statesmen, strong in integrity and patriotism, and gifted with more than Grecian eloquence and learning. England has given birth to aristocrats of whom humanity has reason to be proud—aristocrats by education and personal interest, but men from the higher motives of religion and humanity. However much we are compelled to admire the results of rank, wealth, refinement, and education concentrated upon a few, like the diamond polished by its own dust, yet the system that perpetuates and makes hereditary these distinctions is none the less to be deplored. The government is best which, like that of the United States, or, more properly, of those states in which slavery is excluded, leaves human enterprise untrammelled by invidious privileges and uncorrupted by inalienable luxury. All that any government can do is to make equal laws, and thus render all men equal in

rights, and leave them free under those laws to attain such public and social distinctions as nature and education qualify them for. This is the case in this country, and it is all its Constitution means to assert or confirm when it says all men are born free and equal. Thence it follows that aristocracy among us as a system has no more soil for growth than had the seed sown upon the rock. The sun of democracy withers it in its incipient budding.

What, then, is this aristocracy, that is in every young miss's mouth and in most older heads? I hear of it alike in the country and the city; at the mechanic's bench and the merchant's desk; in the retreat of learning and the focus of fashion. All claim it in their hearts and repudiate it with their tongues. Each enviously attributes it to a neighbor, and shrinks from it himself as a plague-spot; yet it is evident all consider it, like faith in religion, the great and desired social good, but valuable in proportion to its scarcity. Whence this weakness and inconsistency, for such it would at first seem? It is as much an element of our social fabric as is universal suffrage of our political, and, chameleon-like as it may appear, foolish as it may at times display itself, it is at the bottom a civilizing and refining ingredient. The inconsistency of simultaneous desire and repudiation results from a necessary weakness of democratic character. The individual grows up in subservience to the mass. Its opinions and prejudices are alternately his law and his bugbear. He loses sight of the important fact that, because he has yielded his political guidance to the care of the community, it does not follow that his social independence is lost also. The political warning cry of aristocracy rings frightfully in his ears, yet his heart yearns after what he believes to be its flesh-pots. The American citizen is too recent a creature to be wholly freed from the infirmities and vices of the political systems of the Old

World from which he sprung, yet he is rapidly casting his slough. This very feeling and desire in regard to aristocracy I quote in evidence of the truth of my remark. In one class of society, or more properly coterie, I am told such a person who moves in another is considered aristocratic. Elsewhere I hear the same asserted of my last informant, and so on through every gradation in the social ladder. No one points out a class as aristocratic, it is only the individual, and he only is aristocratic as he differs in his style of living or personal manners from his neighbor. Thus aristocracy in the United States resolves itself simply into this fact: A, as a laborer, mechanic, merchant, or professional man, has made more money than B, and consequently spends more, lives better, receives more of the perquisites of cash; hence, in the standard of B's household, A's is aristocratic. C has been better educated, more well-bred, has traveled, and in other ways more improved his mind and manners than D, whose opportunities have been fewer. C thus becomes an aristocrat to D, in the proportion of his greater refinement. E is more learned and aristocratic than F, and so on these changes could be rung through the whole social chime. There is nothing distinctive, invidious, or hereditary in this. It is the legitimate offspring of democracy, and, as such, should be cherished as the true refiner of society. Talent, wealth, and worth, none of which can be created and kept without labor, become thus the orders, the Stars and Garters, the Holy Fleece and Golden Crosses of American society. They constitute the only true Legion of Honor, the true insignia of which are known and worn in the hearts of the people.

The craving for this aristocracy should be cherished as a powerful auxiliary in refining and polishing society. Individuals should discard the false meaning attached to the word in the United States, and if, in their heads as it really does,

the word aristocracy implies but a superior standard of manners, education, or position to their own, strive for it; not with the feeling that Haman viewed Mordecai, but with the consciousness of self-respect and desire of improvement, the birthright of every American, which, if properly sustained, makes him at once a fit companion for princes, and a bright and shining example of the virtue of democratic institutions in forming a man. Such is the character of the only intervention in the affairs of their fellow-men worthy of the genius of American citizens.

This definition of aristocracy will not accord with the views of those who fancy that greatness and goodness in one generation continues greatness and goodness in the next, irrespective of individual worth or ability. It is true that reputation, like sin, is visited upon the third and fourth generation, while the only fame or consideration worth possessing goes not beyond its legitimate founder. Besides, the deeds which in the Middle Ages originated many a noble family, would in this have consigned the doers to state penitentiaries. In but few instances does it repay a rightly-constructed mind to root up the genealogical tree. The Bourbons descended from butchers, and the Plantagenets have descended into butchers, honestly earning their bread in butchering brutes in lieu of winning glory by butchering men. The lordly Montmorencis had no better origin than that of a robber chief, a French Rob Roy, ennobled because too troublesome and powerful to be subdued; and many of England's best estates, with their titles, are but the plunder of religious houses by Henry VIII., or the prizes awarded unblushing vice by the "merry monarch." Great deeds create great names, but great names are no warrant for great deeds. Titled greatness begets courtly corruption, which in the end precipitates its possessors as far below the moral level of society as their rank was above its general grade.

The noblesse of Louis XV. are an apt illustration of this truth. Though personally brave when impelled by vanity, and liberal when pride was aroused, yet they were steeped to the heart's core in profligate egotism. Martyrs, if need be, to sustain individual crime or licentiousness, when the hour of danger to Louis XVI. arrived, they basely fled, and left the monarch to be slaughtered by the masses whose fury their shameless vices had aroused. Madame du Barri, who knew them well, says, the greatest lords sought with eagerness the friendship of Lebel, who ministered to the profligacy of Louis XV. They all had a wife, sister, or daughter ambitious for the post of favorite sultana. Thus the destinies of France were at the mercy of a valet. The Duke de Richelieu, in giving her advice upon her succeeding the Pompadour, after exhibiting in himself inconceivable baseness, concluded by saying, "Take care; you are too good, too frank. Distrust every body; we are all here hypocrites;" and the distrust, hypocrisy, and falsehood so cultivated by the court, has left its traces to this day deep in the general character of the people. "It was impossible to doubt of my favor," continues Madame du Barri, "when I saw noble persons present themselves to fill servile employments about me." Yet these noble persons were the aristocracy of France, and Madame du Barri a young prostitute, but a few days before transported from a low haunt to the palace of Versailles. Yet to such a depth of degradation had this court fallen, that the project of her formal presentation involved more negotiations and intrigue than did at a later period the declaration of war with England and the alliance with the then struggling colonies of America.

Louis XV. sketched the likeness of his nobility with one stroke when he remarked, "One never wounds one here when they make a present," and La Maréchale de Mirepoix as happily illustrated his, when she declared that "he drew with-

out scruple upon the public treasure of France the value of twofold its revenue, but he would have made two parts of a crown out of his own private purse."

The favorite literature of this "well-beloved king" of France was "*Les Dons de Comus*" and "*La Cuisinière Bourgeoise*," the contents of which books he knew by heart. His chief vanity was in being considered an accomplished cook, to obtain the reputation of which he not only discoursed learnedly upon all topics connected with the kitchen, but undertook at times to display the practical proficiency of his own royal hands. At one of his suppers, at which were present sundry "gourmets" of the first water, an omelette of his manufacture was served. It was frightfully burned, for, as the narrator naïvely remarks, kings in general do not make good cooks. They lack attention and patience. All the guests viewed it with consternation. Nevertheless, Louis XV. impartially distributed a part to each, and took his own, saying, "It is a little burned, but still it is eatable." This execrable omelette was devoured and praised, for, as says one of their number, the stomachs of courtiers are equally as devoted to their prince as their hearts.

An amusing, if not instructive narrative might be drawn up from the follies and vices of the aristocracy of this reign, but one could not do this without disclosing orgies and crimes in which appear the noblest names of France, little in accordance with the manners and tastes of the present age. It is better that their mantle of infamy should be undisturbed. To raise it in the least would be to give vent to foul odors. Yet for those whose secret yearnings are for aristocratic rank, and who are believers in the different degrees of fineness of the human porcelain, I would extract from original sketches a picture of patrician pride and dignity that can not fail to enchant them. The lady in question was no parvenu noble. She was the

incarnation of the spirit of rank, an aristocrat to her very marrow ; not an embodiment of vulgar pride or weaker vanity, but a high-minded, lofty-hearted woman, gifted with rare wit and intelligence, and learned in all the accomplishments of her day. Her day was not a brief one, for she connected in her own life the empires of Louis XIV. and Napoleon. By both these monarchs were her hands respectfully kissed ; the former when she was but eleven years of age, and the latter in her ninety-eighth year. The Richelieus and Talleyrands were to her but modern upstarts. She says of the latter family, with a tincture of scorn, that they were never able to make their proofs of nobility date back farther than 1460. The La Fayettees, as philosophers and Republicans, met with no more favor. She looked back upon a long line of grim, crusading warriors, to the days of the saintly Louis, as her ancestors, intermingling with barons, marshals, ambassadors, and dignitaries of Church and state, so that, through courtly favor and well-negotiated marriages, her kin acknowledged the right of precedence to but few in the kingdom. A firm believer in "old families," her mind was stored with the genealogical history of every noble house of Europe. She was a living encyclopedia of rank, a sort of Burke's Peerage in the most delightful of editions, and a store-house of facts and anecdotes connected with the noblesse of France. The cumbersome etiquette of Versailles was to her a faith. She believed in high birth and hereditary monarchy as instituted of heaven ; the legitimate king was to her the Lord's anointed, and any infraction of the ceremonies of rank were sins that required peculiar expiation. Neither her philosophy nor history always extended back to the origin of old families. She was content that they had been illustrious for centuries, had furnished the proofs of nobility previous to 1399, been admitted to the honors of the Louvre, wore the blue cord or red heel, enjoyed the right to

enter the carriages of the king or to follow him to the hunt. Each individual noble was as accurately classed by her in position, honors, and rights, the boundaries of which were as impassable as the northern passage, as if he or she were a numismatic specimen, arranged according to date in a cabinet. The privileges of caste were no less sacred in her eyes than the Ten Commandments. With all this devotion to rank, the Marquise de Créquy was no less devout in her religious creed, in which submission to the Roman Catholic Church figured as conspicuously as submission to her sovereign.

If any of my lady readers are disposed to play the courtly aristocrat, the clippings which I shall take from her life will form a better standard of what is to be expected in that character than any other biography I am acquainted with. She is a model in this respect. If the atmosphere of America be blighting to this species of social fruit, her real virtues are worthy every where of imitation and respect. Weaknesses she undoubtedly had, but they were the exhalations of her aristocratic faith and education. Her very prejudices and hatreds flow so naturally and charmingly from her loyalty, and the proud but quiet consciousness of what, in her eyes, was the elixir of existence—a distinguished descent, that we should consider it as sacrilegious to disturb them as to shake the faith of a departing Christian.

The first visit she made to her grandmother is worth relating in her own words, as illustrating the style of the time. This relative, whose names and titles we have not the patience to inflict upon our readers, even if they possessed the patience to read them, “*était établie sur son estrade et son lit entre quatre colonnes dorées, sous un dais le plus riche et le plus empanache, dont la balustrade était fermée. Sa cornette et sa hongreline de dentelle étaient garnies avec des bouffettes de satin gris de perle, et du reste elle était sous un*

couvre-pieds d'une seule pièce en point de Venise. Je suis persuadée que la garniture de ses draps, valait au moins quarantes mille écus.

"A peine étions-nous assises, qu'on entendit ouvrir les deux battans de toutes les portes de l'enfilade avec un fracas inconcevable, et que nous vîmes apparaître une petite figure qu'on apportait sur un grand fauteuil de velours vert galonné d'argent. C'était une sorte d'image enluminée, grimaçante et peinturlurée comme un joujou de Nuremberg, avec la bouche en cœur et deux petits yeux languissans. Cette étrange figure était habillée d'une étoffe d'argent brodée en chenille verte, et, de plus, elle avait un gros bouquet de verveine à la main. Le fauteuil était porté par quatre géans, habillés en valets de pied; et était environné par cinq ou six petits pages, les plus jolis du monde, et c'était visiblement des enfans de bonne maison, car ils avaient tous la croix de Malte ou celle de Saint Lazare. Un de ces pages était chargé d'un coussin pour mettre sous les pieds (toujours vert et argent); un autre portait une grosse gerbe de verveine et de rhue verte, afin de purifier l'air." This morning caller was the Duke de Gévres.

The following description of a carriage of that epoch, presented by a lover to his mistress, will not be without interest to those whose aristocracy consists in display. The body of the carriage was of deep gilt, ornamented with the most brilliant and finest arabesque paintings, in various colors. On the panels were cupids forming ciphers in garlands of flowers, by the best artists. The glasses were protected by a fine grating of gilt bronze, chased in mauresque, ornamented with golden knots upon each of the intervening spaces. The entire interior was lined with bags filled with herbs of the most delicate perfume. The cushions were covered with pearl satin, richly embroidered with wild flowers in their natural colors, beautifully entwined, and creeping upon a golden trellis, also

embroidered upon the satin. The two seats were also stuffed with perfumed herbs and covered with green satin, embroidered with flowers and leaves of deeper tints. The foot-carpet was made of the feathers of rare tropical birds, sparkling with gold and a thousand bright colors. This carpet alone cost 36,000 francs.

The body of the coach was placed upon a large golden shell, the interior of which was inlaid with mother of pearl so skillfully as to appear but one piece. This shell was supported by groups of charming fairies and young Tritons, cast in bronze with wonderful spirit, and richly gilt. The wheels were fluted and gilt, and the spokes were of solid silver, "which," says Madame de Créquy, "appeared the least thing of all, in the midst of the other magnificence. The harness was loaded with gold, and the horses shod with silver.

Unfortunately for my fair American readers, to whom I would present for imitation the very pearl of aristocracy, Madame de Créquy had a supreme contempt for all wealth or fashion that savored of commerce. Her patent of nobility lay wholly in the sword, and she has but little patience and less forgiveness for even her eminent countrymen of the "haute noblesse" who forsook the profession of that weapon for the learned duties of the robe. Alas for the degeneracy of our race! He who slaughters and sells most pork is nigher a fortune and position than he who fights. Warriors are at a discount; their occupation of fighting "on their own hook" is gone. Commerce has extinguished chivalry. The successful merchant is honored, but knight-errantry ridiculed. By Madame de Créquy's aristocratic code, commerce, once admitted into an old family, sullied forever the pure blood of noble descent. The more numerous the quarterings, the deeper the stain upon the escutcheon. The "damn'd spot" could neither wear nor wash out. Her indignation becomes too

strong for words at a proposition made by M. de Saint Simon to take an interest in a manufactory of pottery established by the Duke de Liancourt. In relating it to her grandson, she simply says, "You will rightly think that I did not take the trouble to reply to him. Figure to yourself your grandmother, Madame de Froulay-Tessé-Beaumanoir et Lavardin, a manufacturer of pitchers, pipes, and pots for sale." It would, indeed, have been a trying name for a firm's sign or signature. Riches, with her, were a good thing to sustain rank, but they were very far from conferring consideration. And to her credit be it said, though long-conferred nobility covered a multitude of sins, yet her standard of individual character was high. Nobility of character she rightly considered should always accompany nobility of descent. Her ideas in regard to the common topic of our age are worth recording. She writes to her grandson: "Listen to the recital of a disaster that will make you grow pale. The Prince de Guéméné, head of the house of Rohan-Rohan, possessed a rent of not less than two millions. He kept up a style proper to such a fortune, without being extravagant or possessing any ruinous tastes. It was sometimes said that he borrowed money on his annuities, but at court and in the fashionable world no one took notice of such speeches. As of a man of fashion or woman of quality, when it was said, *he is rich, she is poor, or they are comfortable*, nothing more was thought of it, and, provided they could appear respectably, nothing further was required. Before the Revolution of 1793 and the miseries of the emigration, just heaven and God of St. Louis! if we had met gentlemen who were agitated about their rents, or showed themselves occupied in matters of money, they would have been exiled to the "Rue Basse" or the Faubourg Poissonnière. The bankers, who lived and dreamed in ciphers, took care to talk no more on these matters than we. The consideration for persons of fashion was

regulated after the nobility of their birth and character, for rank, properly so called, does not always suffice. In every case, personal consideration was independent of wealth. I assure you that no one occupied themselves or spoke of the fortunes of others, unless it was a question of marriage. Those who had no one to marry never listened. The Duchess of Grammont always said that she knew but three persons who spoke of *money*—the Duke of Chartres, M. Neckar, and Madame Neckar.

“It was soon whispered that the Prince of Guémenée was ruined.”

“‘What is that you say?’

“‘It is a complete failure—so say my advocates.’

“‘What does that signify? What is a failure? Explain yourself, you who talk with men of business, and follow the process of suits.’

“‘It is a bankruptcy.’

“‘Then he must have been in commerce. Only merchants become bankrupt; and how could M. de Guémenée?’

“‘They say that his intendant has fled.’

“‘Very well; let him take another. One never need want an intendant.’

“‘It is true, but it creates great talk; the Hotel of Soubise surrounded with a noisy crowd.’

“‘It is very insolent!’

“‘It is inconceivable!’”

Such was the fashionable talk in regard to a deficit of 34,000,000 francs, borrowed chiefly from the savings of work-people and persons of small incomes. As the creditors were not content to remain silent, they were at first considered by the circle of the prince as not possessing “common sense;” but Madame de Créquy says that when it came to be understood that so powerful a lord as M. de Guémenée had borrow

ed money that he could not honorably pay, as his estates were entailed, there resulted among the "haute noblesse" a sort of febrile oppression, intermingled with general indignation and great bitterness.

His wife, Madame de Guéménée, was one of the last to become acquainted with his situation. When it finally reached her ears, she was indignant that so much should be made "*de si peu de chose*." She went to her husband, and told him that she had resources. "At the end of twenty-four hours, with my diamonds, without mentioning plate, of which I have two chambers filled, I shall find more than enough to pay your rents, and the proof is, that they are now coming to count you 12,000,000 on account of a rag of paper that I have had but the trouble to sign. They condemn you to reimburse your loans in place of paying the rents, and your estates are all entailed; but they have always told me that I have more than 50,000,000 of property entirely free. Why did not you and your men of business remember this? But do not talk about those miserable wretches that have so annoyed you. In marrying, my fortune naturally became at your orders. You are the eldest of the house of Rohan, my prince, and, if you were not my husband, I would not leave you in this embarrassment. Permit me to tell you that, in this affair, your conduct has been inconceivably ridiculous."

With all her partiality for the system of which she was herself so worthy a representative, Madame de Créquy testifies that it perished by its own inherent vices. She says Bonaparte wished to call about him the high nobility, who never would have been of any service to him. "The greater part of the great lords had been educated without piety, and had commenced to live too young. Incapable of exercising the authority of rank, they were of races enervated by luxury, weakened in intelligence, and spoiled by domination. Why

did not the great nobility furnish a man to put down the Revolution? Why, among the nobles that distinguished themselves for devotion and capacity, was there not found a single great lord? Why was it that, among all the great lords that figured in the Revolution, there were only to be remarked disloyalty and want of intelligence?" The Bishop of Autun was her *bête noir* in chief. Of him she writes, "This abominable bishop is in my eyes a calamity for the country, an ulcer in the heart of the Church, a shameful sore. I shall never have the cowardice to speak to him, whatever may arrive. I shall always blush in him for the nobility of France, and in him have a horror of myself. I truly believe that I should prefer to mount the scaffold than to enter his house to sit beside him." She would have the nobility true to what she considered their high calling; for "a prince," referring to the Duke of Orleans, "who swims in two waters, who smiles upon the people, and who seems inclined to the side of democracy, appears to me an insupportable man." With all this devotion to her caste, she did not hesitate to frown upon vice, even in a king, though it must be confessed that the thermometer of her severity was as much depressed at the *mésalliance* as the crime. Her heart was born in its right place, and it is curious to observe the occasional effect of an artificial education on her naturally correct judgment. A mistress of rank was *à la mode*, but to stoop to a grisette was unpardonable. Madame de Pompadour could be overlooked, but the presence of Madame du Barri at Versailles was only to be expiated by the absence of Madame de Créquy. She was right, only her conscience did not extend sufficiently far. She says that she ceased to go to court in 1771, and she never saw Madame du Barri but once, at a review at Pablons. Madame de Mirepoix—who, by-the-way, was a character that it would be injustice even to a Du Barri to compare her to, but she was a "maréchale"—was in the same coach, and

at the left of this beautiful lady. "I asked who this unknown princess could be that treated so familiarly the widow of a Prince of Lorraine and a Marshal of France. The Viscount de Laval replied, as if it were nothing, 'It is Madame the Countess du-Barri,' for he had the charming delicacy and the '*courtisauverie*' to separate the article of the name, for a good example. I pulled the check-string, and, without replying to the viscount, ordered the coachman '*chez-moi*.'" As for "*la maréchale*," she cut her from that day henceforward. Yet to those she respected she practiced a courtesy as delicate as rare. Toward Madame Brissac, whose name was "*vénérablement historique*," she had so great consideration that she always apologized when the etiquette of rank obliged her to place herself above her.

The politeness of superiors was not always imitated by their dependents. Having occasion to engage a coachman, before accepting the situation he inquired, "I wish to know of madame to whom madame yields the way." "To every body—I yield to every body except in the streets and court-yards of Versailles." "How! does madame order her first coachman to yield the way in the streets of Paris to presidents?" "Certainly—without doubt." "But madame should not yield to bankers; and madame knows very well, if the servants of a banker dispute the way with her coachman, he will strike them in the face with his whip." "Oh! the bankers should know the liveries, and as for the rest, Mr. Coachman, I do not intend that, on the pavements of Paris, and for persons absolutely without consequence, my carriages should be upset and my horses ham-strung." "It is true, madame has but twelve horses; and, besides, it is my custom only to yield the way to princes of the blood; so I shall not suit, madame?" It would scarcely be prudent, in the year 1852, to say that Louis Napoleon and Rothschild were "*personnages absolument sans con-*

séquence," albeit one is only a president and the other merely a banker.

Perhaps the two extremes of aristocracy have never been better represented than by Madame de Créquy and our Franklin: the former the embodiment of exalted titular rank, cradled in luxury, by nature refined, spirituelle, and sincere, by education versed in all the elegant and many of the solid accomplishments of the day; quick in repartee, keen in wit, and with all her prejudices a sensible aristocrat: the latter equally exalted in rank, the result of his individual merits and the respect and confidence of his fellow-citizens; earnest, honest, and intelligent, without education except such as his own exertions and experience had conferred upon him, despising ceremonies, and inflexible to his creed of utilitarianism, simple in dress and plain in speech: this representative of the people afforded the most striking contrast to the representative of the aristocracy. They met. Their greeting must have reminded the spectators of Vulcan saluting Psyche. Happily for himself and our cause, Franklin arrived at Paris at an epoch when the old regime, with its cumbersome apparel, was fast becoming stale and effete. A novelty was a blessing. Franklin was a decided novelty. Revolutionary ideas had ceased to be such; but a plain, honest, strong-minded democrat was a new thing under the sun of Paris. If the Leviathan had stalked into the Champs Elysées, it would not have created a greater sensation. A fêted lion he was instant, and through him and by him the prestige of rank in France received its death-wound. Franklin was the apostle of the people, without title, without wealth, without ancestry; as mechanic, merchant, philosopher, soldier, statesman, and diplomat, equally distinguished in every sphere, the Titan of them all. No wonder that Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, and women of quality like Madame de Créquy, instinctively dreaded this man. Etiquette

and policy forced the Bourbon and his queen to disguise their sentiments, but the latter lady did not hesitate to declare hers, although she met him but once, at a dinner, when the place of honor, *next* to Franklin, was reserved for her. She says that she did not address him a single word, because she did not know what to say to this "printer." He had on a brown coat, brown vest, breeches of the same color, and a cravat striped with red. "That which I saw the most remarkable in him was his mode of eating eggs. He emptied five or six into a goblet, mingling butter, salt, pepper, and mustard, and thus made a 'joli ragout Philadelphique.' It is right also to tell you that he did not detach his food with a spoon, and that he cut with a knife the pieces of melon he wished to eat; he also bit the asparagus in lieu of cutting the point with his knife upon the plate, and of eating it properly with his fork. You perceive it was the mode of a savage."

Such were the aristocrat's impressions of the democrat. Pity we have not the reverse of the picture. In lieu, however, she gives two other anecdotes worth relating. Madame Neckar invited Franklin and his grandson, aged four years, to meet Voltaire at dinner. She besought the sage of Ferney to bestow his benediction upon the little American. Voltaire arose, and, placing his hands upon the head of the urchin, exclaimed, in the tone of a "diable enrhumé," "LIBERTÉ, TOLERANCE ET PROBITÉ!"

Among the salutations of etiquette, it was required to bow to the throne of France in passing before it, as is done by good Catholics of the present day before their altars. In addition to this, however, equal reverence was demanded for the Cadenat of the king. Franklin, seeing the Cardinal de la Rochefoucault bow before this great gilt box, asked if it contained sacred relics. Upon being informed that it held the *utensils of the table*, he exclaimed, "*Prodigious!*" which my readers will doubtless cordially echo.

Madame de Créquy says she never had her hand upon the knocker of her own door but once, and then she did not know how to use it. It was the morning after the fearful catastrophe in the present Place de la Concorde, by which twelve hundred lives were lost on the occasion of the fête of the marriage of Marie Antionette. Madame de Créquy had remained all night in a ditch, into which she had been precipitated by the crowd, without injury. She was then near seventy years of age, and unable to get out in the dark without assistance. She heard the voices of the patrol, and at first thought of asking assistance, but was prevented by a sort of sentiment which she had not suspected was in her. "Old age is sometimes embarrassed without being timid, and particularly when it is overcome with a feminine sentiment, that is, a sort of delicacy, or, if you like it better, of natural coquetry. It seemed to me that to those soldiers my apparition would give impertinent ideas; for instance, that of an old sorceress issuing from the earth. I feared they would laugh at me when they saw my face, and it appeared beneath me to solicit succor at the price of money; for, take away my name, titles, and fortune, and each one of those men would save, in preference to me, any clumsy, gross, but pretty-faced chamber-maid." So she remained quietly all night in that ditch amid the wounded and dead, scrambling out at daybreak, and, for the first time probably, walking unattended to her own hotel.

Her memoirs are a wonderful example of the saying that a French woman never grows old, at least in mind. Bordering on a century, she is as witty, as fresh, and as malicious as at twenty. Nothing escapes her observation, and neither memory nor any of her senses appear to have lost the vigor of youth. Not the least interesting portion of her life is that she spent in the prisons of Paris, where, scorning to emigrate, she was at last sent. She was apprehended under the charge of

distributing forged assignats. They searched her person in the most odious and insolent manner, and at last thrust her into a cellar, in which there was neither seat of any kind nor even straw. They undertook to interrogate her, and asked if she was 93 years old. She was that; and believing that death must, at all events, soon visit her in some other shape, if not by the guillotine, she determined not to open her lips. For once an old woman baffled the cunning and ferocity of that dread tribunal. Nothing could overcome her silence. They saw it was folly to threaten death to nearly fivescore years; and finally, after grinding their teeth and shaking their fists at her in impotent rage, they cursed her for a deaf old aristocrat, and left her, without food or bed, to pass the night as she best could on the damp floor of her dismal dungeon.

On the second anniversary of the capture of the Bastile, she had been ordered to illuminate her hotel, but refused. Her aristocracy was so firm that, even in those days of terror, it inspired respect. Robespierre treated her with marked civility, and defended her cause against a claimant for her property, who asserted himself to be the rightful heir. He was the son of a mechanic in the Rue St. Denis, or was supposed to be, and, after pressing his suit for some years, was guillotined as an *aristocrat*.

The jailer had two young children, both of whom were sick with the small-pox. Madame de Créquy, fearing they would die, stole quietly into their room at night, and baptized them into the faith of the Holy Catholic Church, administering the rite without the consciousness even of its recipients. Had she been detected, she would have been hurried promptly to execution. She says, in leaving the prison after the fall of Robespierre, she revealed the fact to their mother, that the poor children might know to whom they belonged in case God took their lives.

The scenes she describes of her prison life are replete with humor and pathos, at one time having for her companions Madames Roland and Josephine Beauharnais. The last of August, 1794, she was called upon to mount the fatal cart that conveyed the prisoners to the scaffold. Being delayed by some indispensable preparations, the driver cursed her for keeping him waiting, in the multiplicity of his epithets calling her a "*vieille calotinocrate-aristocrache*." The delay saved her life. The jailer came in and explained that it was another Créquy that was called. Mistakes in names were not uncommon, and seldom corrected before the tribunal. The full complement of heads was required, and it mattered little by what names they were known.

She was soon after released, and, notwithstanding her sufferings, found herself rejuvenated twenty years, which she attributes to the severity of her abstinence, and particularly to the rigor of the cold, for no fires were allowed. Yet she adds, for all that, it was a frightful punishment.

With a sentiment not uncommon to long captivity, she at first regretted her prison, her companions, and the fraternity of misfortune. Her friends were exiled, massacred, or fled. Her vast hotel was more dreary than her prison. Besides, one risked being slain in '94 in the heart of Paris. The massive gates, jailers, chains, and dogs of her prison were so many pledges of security, which she now missed, and it was some time before she could reconcile herself to her desolate and cheerless grandeur.

There were many touching episodes of that prison life ; others in which ludicrousness overpowered every other sentiment. Hearts there were that went cheerfully to the scaffold rather than avail themselves of an equivocation proffered to them by the humanity of a Fouquier Tinville—wives, unnamed in the fatal list, who triumphed over the resistance of jailers, and

joyfully laid down their heads beside those of their condemned husbands. There were bitter quarrels between an Abbé St. Simon and a provincial marquis, whom Madame de Créquy apostrophizes with "*que Dieu confonde.*" The two slept on the staircase, the marquis being several steps above the abbé. "It was often in the middle of the night that their disputes were the most violent, because the marquis would spit upon the head of the abbé, who did not wish to permit any such liberty."

One day they passed in a small, pale woman, who bowed as she entered, but never spoke to any one during the three days and nights she passed in their chamber. She sat all that time upon a straw chair, taking only a few mouthfuls of bread and red wine, which the jailer forced the "old woman Créquy" to take to her. She kept her eyes constantly fixed upon a box, which she had placed upon another chair before her, on which she rested her feet. Although the prisoners were suffering greatly from cold, she incessantly fanned herself.

One morning they missed her, but the box remained. Madame Baffot inquired of the jailer if she would return. He significantly replied by drawing his hand across his neck. The box was opened, and in it found a bloody shirt from which the collar had been cut, a handful of black hair, and a little scrap of paper, on which was written, "*For my mother.*" Nothing further was ever known of either victim.

If we are to pass judgment on a body by the general character of its members, neither society nor humanity lost much in many of the decapitations of the aristocracy of this period. They were unjustly condemned and barbarously executed; consequently, their deaths have attracted to their fates a generous sympathy which the general tenor of their lives little warranted. A few anecdotes will illustrate this. Among the many so admirably told in these memoirs, it is difficult to decide upon the best.

The aunt of Madame de Créquy, the Chavonine Countess of Mauberge, who died at 101 years of age without experiencing any infirmities, called, in company with a friend, upon Madame du Deffand. Courtesy prompted them to inquire of the health of a *dear* friend of their hostess, then dangerously ill, but with whom she had entertained intimate relations for fifteen years, in accordance with the loose customs of the age.

“How is the dear invalid?”

“Eh! mon Dieu! I have but one lackey here at this moment; I will send one of my women to demand the news.”

“Madame, it rains in torrents; I beg you to make use of my coach.”

“Ah! you are infinitely good, and I thank you a thousand times,” charmingly replied Madame du Deffand. “Mademoiselle,” said she to her *femme de chambre*, “go and learn news of our dear little invalid. Madame the countess permits you to go in her coach on account of the rain. I am very grateful, and much touched,” continued she, “for your interest in my favorite. He is so amiable, lively, and caressing. You know I am indebted to Madame du Chatelet for him.” The two callers looked in astonishment at each other at a confidence so extraordinary and uncalled for. At length the carriage returned. “Ah! how have you found him?”

“Madame, as well as could be expected.”

“Has he eaten to-day?”

“He has wished to amuse himself in biting an old shoe, but M. Lyonnais would not permit it.”

“Really,” exclaimed the aunt, “a singular phantasy of an invalid.”

“But does he walk yet?” inquired Madame du Deffand.

“As for that I can not tell, because he was lying on a little blue satin mattress; but he knew me perfectly well, for he wagged his tail.”

"Monsieur the Chevalier de Pont-de-Vesle," exclaimed both the amazed visitors, "wagged his tail!"

"Ah, madames, it is of my little dog she speaks. I will send to inquire immediately of the health of M. de Pont-de-Vesle."

The Maréchale de Noailles was an original fool, as may be readily credited from the following examples of her mode of showing it. She maintained a correspondence with the Holy Virgin and the Patriarchs, depositing her letters in a pigeon-hole at her hotel, religiously believing that the responses received were as authentic as her own letters.

She was sometimes a little shocked at the tone of familiarity which the Holy Virgin took with her, "Ma chère Maréchale," and at the third line, said she, with a scornful air, "It must be allowed that the formula is a little familiar on the part of a peasant woman of Nazareth, but one must not be too exacting with the mother of our Savior," inclining her head as she pronounced the name of Jesus, "and it is to be considered that the husband of the Virgin was of the royal race of David."

She went one day to the high altar of Notre Dame to pray that her husband the duke might receive 1,800,000 francs of which he was then in need, the order of the Garter, and, finally, a diploma as prince of the Holy Roman Empire, the only honors not in the family.

She suddenly heard a juvenile voice from the altar respond, "Madame the maréchale, you shall not have the 1,800,000 francs you ask for your husband: he has already 100,000 crowns rent, and that is enough; he is already duke and peer, grandee of Spain, and Marshal of France; he has the collar of the Holy Ghost and that of the Golden Fleece: your family is overwhelmed with the gifts of the court. If you are not satisfied, it is because it is impossible to satisfy you. Your husband shall not have the Garter of St. George."

The lady not for a moment doubted that the voice was other than that of the infant Jesus, who was replying for his mother. She immediately called out, "*Hold your tongue, little fool, and let your mother speak.*" It was a page of the queen, who, knowing her folly, had hid himself behind the altar.

After the fall of Robespierre, the few remaining noblesse issued from their retreats more frivolous and selfish, if possible, than before the storm. Madame de la Reynière exclaimed to a visitor, "How sorry I am that the Viscountess of Narbonne was not guillotined!"

"But why should you wish such a thing?"

"Ah! I demand nothing better than that you should ask my reasons. Firstly, I am bored to death by hearing her spoken of."

"But, as she is about the same age as you, she perhaps has the same cause to reproach you."

"There is something worse than that: she was guilty of an impertinence to me in '85, at the Hotel de Soubise; I wish she had been massacred in the prisons. You know they have exiled the Abbé d'Albignac. I am glad of it, he was so tedious."

"How is your son? What has become of him in all this?"

"My son," replied the other, gaping, "has his fortune apart, and I have not heard him spoken of for a long time. When God did me the favor to have the misfortune to lose Monsieur de la Reynière, they told me that my son was drowned at Nantes, but this, unfortunately, was not true. You know the parents inherit from their children since the Revolution, and as he makes a bad use of his fortune, I wish much to have it to myself alone."

With one more characteristic trait of the times, I shall have done. Madame de Galissonnière was the principal heiress of Madame de Pompadour. She had for a lover a M. Dejenaive.

Learning one day of the death of his mistress, he forced the door of the chamber where she was laid out, and there discovered her corpse upon a table, in the frightful condition as left by the examining physicians. He threw himself upon it, plucked out the heart, wrapped it up in his handkerchief, put it in his pocket, and left the house like a madman.

Some time after, in relating the incident to Madame de Coislin, "Do you know what became of it?" said he.

"No; go on; you make me shudder."

"Ah! mon Dieu, yes! I threw it down in rage upon a trunk when I entered my chamber. I went to bed and slept to distract my mind. The next morning I saw that the handkerchief had fallen upon the floor. I sprang from my bed—*my dog had eaten it*—I killed him with one blow of a knife, but I could discover nothing of it—nothing at all. I then remembered that I had forgotten to feed him for several days past. What a dramatic and romantic adventure, is it not, madame?"

The idea of the great Napoleon as a little, sniffing, angry urchin, in these after-times of his glory, strikes one as almost incomprehensible. Yet Madame de Créquy gives us an anecdote characteristic both of his temper and age. A lady presented to her Madame Bonaparte, "escorted by a legion of badly-dressed children."

"There was in this covey of Corsican birds a little boy who wept. His eyes were very red, but he appeared to swallow his tears. To pass the time, I benevolently asked his mother the reason of his affliction. 'Madame,' said she, in a gruff voice and awkward pronunciation, 'he is a monster.' In leaving the Bishop d'Autun, he had refused to kiss the hand of my lord, for which his mother had soundly boxed his ears as soon as they had entered their coach." Madame de Créquy viewed the introduction of the Bonaparte family to her in about as amiable and condescending a mood as would a "Fifth Avenue"

dame an invasion of backwoods cousins from Arkansaw into her drawing-rooms on a month's visit.

Her next interview with the "petit garçon" was when he was master of the Tuileries. The First Consul requested her presence. She was announced as the Citizen Créquy, and at once found herself tête-à-tête with the conqueror of the Pyramids.

"He looked at me one or two minutes with an air of study, which was succeeded by a false air of tenderness. Then he said, with an expression which I call almost filial, 'I have desired to see you, madame;' but he soon retook a sufficient and passably impertinent tone: 'You are a hundred years old—'

" 'Not quite, but nearly.'

" 'How old are you, exactly?'

" 'I was tempted to laugh at such an interrogatory, and particularly in such an imperative form. 'Monsieur,' I replied, smiling as one smiles at my age, alas! and perhaps he did not perceive that I smiled, 'I can not tell my precise age. I was born in a chateau of Maine.'

" 'Where do you lodge?'

" 'At the Hotel de Créquy.'

" 'The devil—and in what quarter?'

" 'Rue de Grenelle.'

" 'You had commotion yesterday in your quarter. Were you afraid?'

" 'I was not inquieted.'

" 'No emeutes are possible under my government—no serious emeutes, but disturbances, I do not say. A handful of discontented persons have the air of something, but it is nothing. Is it not true?'

" 'Oh, surely. Three women who cry make more noise than three thousand men who hold their tongues.'

" 'What you say is very good—do you know what you have said is very good?'

In reply to the question, "Have you suffered from the revolutionary decrees?" she alluded to some landed property that had been confiscated, which he accorded to her with "une grâce parfaite;" afterward observing, with a distracted air, "Madame, to desire to do good during a revolution is to write upon the sand of the sea-shore; that which escapes the winds is effaced by the waves."

"Did you know Dubois and Cartouche?"

"I looked at him without replying, and so severely, that I am astonished when I recall it. He felt himself, apparently, that it was bad taste to ask news of Cartouche of the Marquise Dowager of Créquy; and he made me a smile, so fine, so sweet, and so frank, that I remained totally disarmed.

"Permit me to kiss your hand," said he. I hastened to draw off my glove. 'Leave your glove, my good mother,' added he, with an air of exquisite solicitude; then he applied his lips strongly to the tips of my poor centennial and decrepit fingers, which were uncovered."

With all her aristocratic pride and prejudice, she was as powerless to resist the fascination of manner of Napoleon when he was in the view, as were equally the hereditary sovereigns of Europe, or his own rough, republican generals. "Poor soldier!" exclaims she, in the fullness of her proud commiseration for his low parentage; "he knew only the illustrious names of the illustrious personages with whom I had passed my life in this same chateau that he uses as his own;" and farther on the following reflection involuntarily escapes her, in mingled pathos and pride: "Alas! that to-day they should give me this high name of Créquy, which I shall bear the last, and which they will soon write for the last time in a dirty register, beside the names of all the world, and perhaps on the same page with that of a Merlin or of a De Gasparin."

Madame de Créquy died early in 1803, her exact age being

unknown, but supposed to be not less than one hundred years. In the early part of her life her health was deplorable, and she purchased at a low price, for *her life*, the hotel of the Marquis de Fenquières, which she occupied for *seventy* years—somewhat maliciously boasting of her great bargain. The “*Journal des Débats*” of 15th of February, 1803, says: “Her piety edified the disciples of the Gospel; her charity nourished the poor, and even to her last days she preserved, by a species of miracle, her brilliant imagination, depth of understanding, freshness of memory, eclat of wit, and profundity of reflection, that had always rendered her the admiration and delight of distinguished men of every class and all countries.” One can not read her memoirs without crediting this eulogium. She was a fine specimen of the born and trained aristocrat, and as such I can recommend her memoirs to my readers as the least exceptionable and most amusing and instructive of that class of French literature. Generally, they are either the stale records of selfish intrigues, or the piquant narratives of individual vice and heartless crime, so intermingling truth with falsehood that the reader often throws them aside in perplexity and disgust. Here we have, however, daguerreotype likenesses of an aristocracy formed by an education that, while it robed them with elegances of person, left them destitute of the graces of the heart. I would exhibit them only as the Spartans did to their youth the drunken helots, as warnings against an insidious mental vice. But with that aristocracy to which I before alluded, which refines the intellect and disciplines the heart, educating in happy balance and unison the moral and intellectual sentiments, creating among men the sole permanent distinctions of goodness and greatness, I would that our entire democratic lump was leavened. He who happily combined the two in one harmonious whole was WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER II.

MATRIMONY, BOWS, ETC

THE moral welfare of society hinges so closely upon the greater or less estimation in which marriage is held, that the interest with which this tie is viewed can never be exclusively confined to those "in the market." This phrase, so suggestive of buying and selling, has acquired in fashionable life, even with us, a positive significancy. I refer not to Circassian beauty, sold by its weight. To appreciate my meaning in its broad and full *Christian* sense, we must turn to France. There a marriage is a literal matter of negotiation, in which Cupid has, in general, as little to do as in the sale of a pony or purchase of the three per cents. Hopeless is the case of the maiden without a "*dot*." The indispensable dowry stands in lieu of charms, education, accomplishments, character, and even virtue itself—not but that each and all of these, when to be had, enhance the value of the acquisition. But the first article of the matrimonial creed in France is, "I devoutly believe in the 'dot,' as the one thing needful with a wife." If the candidate probe farther, it is chiefly to ascertain whether there be a scrofulous taint or hereditary insanity in the family of the adored one. These matters satisfactorily ascertained, the parents on either side hold a congress to arrange settlements for the young couple, provide for the exigencies of the anticipated generation, and to see that the affairs of the purse are made smooth and straight; a practice which, by-the-way, if it were more often imitated here, would spare much of the

misery arising from the thoughtless and hasty manner in which many American marriages are made. It often happens that the swain, beyond a family name or social position, has nothing to recommend him besides the experience of nearly three-score years, a well-preserved figure, and an empty purse. He has arrived at a condition in his fortune when a dowry of five hundred thousand francs becomes a consummation devoutly to be hoped for. His familiar starts such a one with the sagacity of a trained pointer. Negotiations are commenced, and the first time that "sweet sixteen" may see her partner for life is when he is presented as her prospective husband. Mamma and papa have arranged it all. An old man, with nothing but his bank-notes to recommend him, will sometimes buy a young girl; but he seldom has occasion to congratulate himself on his purchase. I am now speaking of the general rule. There are exceptions, of course; and faithful couples, and happy domestic circles, are not rare in France. Love, in the American sense, is, however, a very minor consideration.

Now it would be requiring too much of human nature to expect it to rise above its own standard of action. The corrupt tree must bring forth corrupt fruit. So, where the principle of marriage is mainly a compound of pecuniary gain, social distinction, or selfish desire, the active result must be equally a compound of prodigality or meanness, pride or vanity, lust or epicurism, leavened with tyranny on one side and deceit on the other. This applies more particularly to the upper rounds of the social ladder. As we descend, the marriage principle partakes more of the practical requirements of a business copartnership; to the benefits of which the female, if she can not bring a cash capital, must contribute untiring muscles and indefatigable industry. Not the tidy, *home* labor of the American female, whose greatest penance is a wash-tub, but a downright junior-partnership division of out-door work, shop-

tending, book-keeping, and merchandise-buying, in addition to baby-raising and housekeeping labors. Whether from her superior energies, or the lordly laziness of her mate or not, it is difficult to decide, but certain it is that she invariably becomes the "man" of these "ménages," and daring must be the Frenchman who would openly act within the articles of this copartnership upon his sole responsibility.

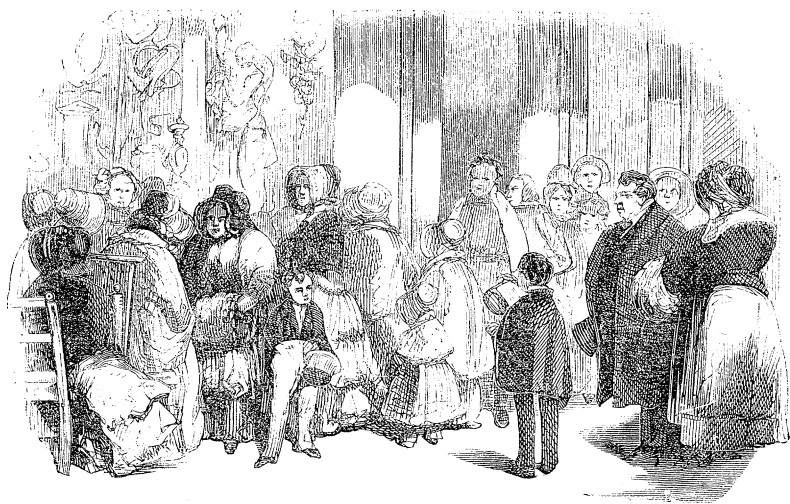
What unfledged traveler has ever been proof against the irresistible arguments of these trading syrens, until his experiences in shopping have convinced him that a hundred francs for an article he did not want, and which was not worth as many sous, was too dear, even with the fascinating smile and oily "but this agrees so nicely with Monsieur's charming figure," or "fits exactly Monsieur's little hand," thrown in. They have a way of sliding in a side compliment in a remark to Madame, if she be with you, or, for want of a better bait, to their own husbands, that is sure to tell upon a John Bull just over, and seldom fails to be as effective on more cautious Jonathan. What chance, then, has an Asiatic, with his Eastern



JUST THE THING.

notions of female seclusion about him, to escape the wiles of these infidel houris?

Now marriage in France is far from being, as with us, a mere nod and its echo by a man and woman before a justice of the peace, a few commonplace words, and an engagement for life concluded with less trouble than the buying of a railroad ticket; but it is a serious and expensive affair. First, the bans must be duly published in the journals for several weeks; then, on the day appointed, the parties and a troop of friends go before the mayor of their arrondissement, where the knot is *civilly* tied; from thence to the church, where, with



THE CIVIL MARRIAGE.

religious pomp in proportion to the promised fee, the knot is retied, blessed, and sanctified by the priest. The kissing and congratulations completed, the wedding party adjourn to spend the night in dancing and festivity.

This over, the parties have entered upon a marriage that would drive a Fourierite or a Sandite to despair. The church



THE ECCLESIASTICAL MARRIAGE.

having become a party to the contract, it is forever indissoluble. The most stringent causes have no more weight than the lightest distastes. Madame, your wife, is madame, your wife, until she is accommodating enough to take up her residence in perpetuity at Père le Chaise. Money and influence may at times procure a separation of beds and chattels, but nothing more. The result of so fixed a yoke would, in a more moral country, with many couples, lead to incalculable private unhappiness; but the French have a way of lightening domestic loads, procuring congenial sympathies, and assuming a philosophical blindness to each other's frailties, that goes far to ward off connubial chafing. As I do not think the secret would benefit my countrywomen, I shall not disclose it.

The Code Napoleon allowed considerable latitude for divorce, but so hedged in with restrictions that it could not pro-

duce evil, if fairly applied ; while, on the other hand, it did away with many present temptations to immoral connections. At the Restoration, the laws permitting divorce were abrogated. Repeated but vain attempts have been made since to reintroduce them into the Code. It remains to be seen whether the nephew, in his revival of the institutions of his uncle, will revive these.

No institution has been more the foot-ball of French legislation, since 1791, than that of marriage. Fouché, when he was in the department of the Nièvre, instituted a fête in honor of Nature and the Republican Hymen. He gathered together four hundred youths of each sex, most of whom had never seen each other before, upon a meadow on the banks of the Loire. At one o'clock he appeared, costumed as the high-priest of Nature, surrounded by a cortège of sans culottes, preceded by a band of music.

"Young citizens," cried he, "commence by choosing each of you a wife from these modest virgins."

Immediately fifteen or twenty precipitated themselves upon a pretty girl of Donzy, whose father was well known to be a wealthy cabinet-maker. On her part, she resisted stoutly, weeping, and refusing to listen to any of her admirers, because she loved tenderly an absent cousin.

As might be supposed, this matrimonial battle produced little satisfaction and still less harmony. The preferences of the young men and girls did not always correspond. It soon became a contest between natural liberty and individual choice. The troops were obliged to interfere and separate the disputants. They were then divided into two columns, and paired off as chance had placed them, according to their numbers, thus for once realizing for marriage that it was but a lottery. The ceremony terminated with a grand supper spread upon the "plain of equality." The husband to whom

the pretty girl of Donzy was allotted became afterward a rich republican general.

This gratuitous distribution of wives reminds me of an anecdote of the times illustrative of the opposite principle—of taking away what one hath. It might have been supposed that a name innocently handed down from father to son would have been left untouched by the republican shears. But no. After the sublime decess, Reason, usurped the place of the Holy Virgin in the churches, it was forbidden to make use of the word “saint,” or to attach the aristocratic “de” to family names. A Mr. Saint Denis was called before the section of Guillaume Tell, and interrogated firstly as to his name.

“I am called Saint.” “But there are no longer any ‘saints.’” “Then I am *De*.” “But there are no ‘*de*’s.” “Then I must call myself ‘Nis.’ Mr. Nis, at your service, since you leave me nothing more.”

Modesty has a widely different signification in France from the United States. Since the putting of pantalets upon the legs of a piano has ceased to be the apocryphal story of a cynical John Bull, the modesty of American ladies stands upon the very apex of refinement. Even in London, I have met one—she was from the West, however, and of excellent sense in other particulars—who talked to me some time about the “limbs” of a fine babe in her arms, before I discovered that it was his fat legs she was commending.

I do not wish to be considered as depreciating American modesty, even if mawkishly exhibited, as the excess is on the side of virtue. Among French women there is a plainness of speech in all points that conveys the exact truth upon any subject without the slightest circumlocution. They assume no disguise to their meanings. Even when a little sentiment would be a decided and welcome embellishment, it is ruthlessly thrust aside. I have heard in society remarks from la-

dies of rank, that elsewhere would have startled me ; and yet here custom disrobes them of all impropriety. Still, I think, for the sake of the high-toned sentiment a man of refinement would ever cherish toward the sex that bestows upon him his purest pleasures and associations, a little more of social poetry, or prudery, as some would ungallantly term it, would be welcome even in France. While such liberties are taken with the tongue, there is more outward show of modesty in the intercourse of the sexes than with us. The same ladies, whose lips tripped not over any description or allusion, were really shocked when I told them that at our fashionable ocean retreats it is customary for men and women promiscuously to bathe. For a young couple to ride or walk together, unattended by a near relative, would be an unpardonable indecorum

On a rainy day a French woman of any rank hesitates not, if necessary to save her skirts, to expose her legs as freely as her arms. It is really astonishing to see with what grace and purity they will carry their hose and linen over the muddiest ways.



Each is of the finest character and most elaborately finished, so that not even a bachelor of flinty threescore can look upon these adroit walkers with unadmiring eyes.

To return to my original topic, marriage. The following extract from a journal, furnished me by no matter whom, will explain admirably some of my preceding views.

"I have been married since the 20th of January, 185—, that is to say, about fifteen days. *Mon Dieu!*" (French women of every quality are given to exclamations which their more sensitive American sisters would term "swearing," but which,

after all, are as innocently intentioned as any puritanical "good gracious!" or "bless me!") "what a change has so short a time wrought in my ideas! Is it I who am wrong, or is it marriage? I do not know. Here are my impressions. May it please Heaven that I do not become deranged in recording them upon paper.

"Marriage," said my schoolmates to me, 'is the realization of our most poetic dreams; the tender sentiments felt at the sight of a young man, the inquietudes thus we experience at the return of spring time, or the rising of the moon behind the acacias; the necessity of weeping without a motive that so often seizes upon us—all these emotions,' said they, 'explain themselves in marriage. The soul divines in this word the enigma.' So I left my boarding-school.

"I said to myself, without being quite as romantic as my young companions, 'It is not possible that my parents have kept me ten years at school, that they have had me taught Italian, German, English, music, singing, design, painting, literature, and dancing, to marry a man who does not love the arts.'

"The day after leaving my school, my mother said to me, 'You will marry a rich paint-merchant of —— Street.'

"My first question was, 'Does he know music?' 'I tell you,' replied my mother, 'that he is a paint-merchant.'

"Eight days after, they led me to the mayor's office for the civil rite, thence to the church for the religious ceremony. It was the first time but one that I had seen my husband—

"I have just been interrupted by one of his customers, who ordered from me fifty pounds of putty, a barrel of verdigris, two casks of glue, twenty pounds of sulphur, and two papers of asafœtida.

"After having washed my hands fifty times without destroying the odors of the above fragrant merchandise, I retake my pen to continue my married experience.

“My friend,” said I to him at the end of eight days, ‘will you buy me a piano?’ ‘What for?’ inquired he of me: ‘how much does one cost?’ ‘Twelve hundred francs.’ ‘Twelve hundred francs!’ exclaimed he, in amazement: ‘I prefer with that money to buy whale oil, and wait a rise. Besides, a married woman never touches a piano.’

“I submit.

“Another interruption—my husband awakes.

“What are you reading there?” he called out, with considerable anger in his tone; ‘do you read in the shop? There is always something to do here—put on the labels—pack—measure—weigh.’ ‘All is done, my friend,’ I replied. ‘What book is that?’ ‘The poems of Ossian, the son of Fingal.’ ‘You know English, then?’ ‘Yes, my friend.’ ‘You know every thing, then,’ and he turned his back upon me, sneering.

“I resign myself.

“Habitue, submission, and resignation are, I know, the graces, the three theological virtues of marriage. I know that I shall perform my duties so as to please even my husband.

“But why, I ask, do they teach young girls so many things that later only inspire them with regret that they have learned them? Why not educate them to be the wives of paint-merchants, grocers, butchers, &c.?”

This is no romance, but the actual experience of thousands



MONSIEUR.

of well-educated, refined, and sentimental misses in France. Is it strange that they should ripen into the practical, unpoetical, manœuvring, hard-working, but pleasure-loving women we so often find there? Freshness of features and delicacy of outline they certainly lose, but courtesy of speech ever abides with them. The domestic heart that lightens up a *home*—what becomes of it? Home! in English a word expressive of every tender and true emotion—the concentration of the joys of life—in French is simply “chez-moi.” Not, as with us, a combination of I’s, forming a harmonious unity under a loved roof, each contributing to the general stock of happiness from his own overflowing affections; the family holy of holies, sacred from the stranger’s eye, overshadowed by cherub and seraph, from whose hearts constantly ascends the incense of peace and love, but a spot wherein the individual “moi” may be located, sometimes where he sleeps, oftener where he eats; on the boulevard, in the restaurant, sipping black coffee and drinking clear brandy, on a sidewalk in front of *his* café; in short, wherever the individual Frenchman finds it most for his individual pleasure to be. You might as well try to locate a will-o’-the-wisp, or to keep stationary a fire-fly, as to fix upon a Frenchman’s home. It is wherever he shines brightest or dazzles most. His pleasures consist in the outer life—the external gilding; bright and beautiful without, but, like gold-leaf, often covering what is decayed and hollow within. In short, “home” and “chez-moi” are the social antipodes.

I have again thrust my hand into my roll of life-experiences, and drawn out Lisette’s letter to Juana. How I came by this, and other equally instructive epistles, is mine and not the reader’s business. If he be a Yankee, let him fall back upon his birthright of guessing. Suffice it, that they not only tell the truth in these individual instances, but echo the half-acknowl-

edged truth from myriads similarly conditioned. If parents barter their daughters for a position, they need not be surprised if the connubial tree ripens rebellion and hypocrisy on one side, and suspicion and severity on the other. But in France, these fruits, so bitter and choking within, are without like the apples that grow on the borders of the sea of Sodom, very fair to behold.

Lisette was, in the youthful days of her marriage, as submissive, sad, and sensitive as the paint-merchant's bride. Time and trial, however, have made her worldly-wise and wondrous cunning. Her husband, a wealthy bourgeois, judges women by his own weaknesses. It would require a strong necessity to deprive him of any of his favorite gratifications. His own deficiencies he seeks to counterbalance in the forced self-denials of his wife—a species of vicarious expiation of male sins common to matrimony ever since the discovery has been made that the twain are *not* one. Now Lisette is afraid of her husband, and so outwits him. Show me the woman in whom deception is not the twin of fear. Husbands, make a note of this—root it out, transplant to its place confidence; so shall he have love and peace.

“DEAR JUANA,—My bear is gone; now we can amuse ourselves under a free sky. God be praised, I am free. To crown my felicity, my two grenadiers of daughters have gone back to their boarding-school this morning. Do you know, it is not always agreeable to have by one's side, every where one goes, two great registers of birth, plainly declaring, Mamma should be from thirty to thirty-five. ‘I tell you,’ adds some charitable soul, ‘that she is thirty-seven. Calculate! She was married at twenty-four.’ To cut short all such assassins, I have cloistered these two misses. It is a year gained.

“The first use I shall make of my liberty is to read the novel which has been the rage for six months. My husband has excited in me an irresistible desire to know more of it, from saying ‘I forbid you to read it—it is stupid and immoral.’ At length I shall read this book. I will tell you if it is as full of points as they say.

“Now or never, we can go to the little theatres—another antipathy of my bear.

“Take a box for to-morrow, I beg you. We will go together to see the Bohemians of Paris. I have read in a newspaper that it is full of robbers, monsters, and kidnappers, that make their victims disappear through trap-doors. Secure, by all means, a stage-box.

“You asked me the other day, in an excess of bad-humor, in what I made consist earthly happiness. I understood you, my poor Juana. Happiness often consists, not in possessing what we have not, but in ceasing to possess what we have. Your happiness would be, perhaps, oh misery! in becoming a widow. I do not say that you wish the death of your husband. That is no more your wish than mine, although our positions are so similar. But you and I can perceive the delight of being free with the experience we have acquired. How one could respire with a full-drawn breath in escaping from the prisons of the conjugal yoke, to enter into the paradise of widowhood! Widow! widow! that word breathes liberty! One then can go where they wish, see whom they wish, go out when they wish, and return when they wish. How charming! Is not such a condition, for a woman, the happiest of all social positions, dear Juana?

“Patience, sweet friend; in waiting, let us take all the pleasure we can during the absence of my husband, an excellent man at bottom, and of whom I have nothing to complain, and the sickness of yours, who is tiresomely long in his

illness. Say to him a thousand amiable things on my part.
Adieu. Don't forget the novel and the box at the theatre.

“Ta fidèle,

LISETTE.”

The contrast between the staid recognition of street friends in America, with the succession of deep and diversified salutations which precede a conversation in the public places of Paris, is very striking to one accustomed only to the former, or the angular, undignified elbow-jerk, or finger lifted to the hat, which pass for bows among Anglo-Saxons. The latter might well, in view of the ceremonious pantomime of the Parisians, come to the same conclusion as did the Chevalier Marin three centuries since, that “in France all conversation commenced with a ballet.” It frequently does with a hug which would do honor to Bruin, and a succession of kisses on each cheek that explode like warm soda-water. It is a *curiosity* to an American to see two huge Frenchmen, whiskered and mustached to an extent that would set up half a dozen Hungarian refugees in face-hair, rush like two meteors, from opposite sides of the street, into each other's arms, kissing each other with the rapidity of platoon firing on a field-day. As a gallant man, he would consider it a shameful waste of the raw material, and think gratefully of his mamma, who taught him to reserve all such demonstrations of affection for his sisters and sweetheart. If he wish to obtain a correct idea of the confusion of tongues at Babel before the confusion became confounded, let him stop and hear them talk. Of what use ears are to an excited Frenchman naturalists have yet to discover. At the same time, we would have them extend their investigations into the flexibility of a French tongue as compared with an English organ of speech. It would be curious to determine the exact difference between the two.

But to return to the flexibility of the back, or, in other words,

to the little street ballets of which we just spoke. From the diversities of style in salutation we can learn not a little of the history of Parisian society. The profound, triplicate salutation, so difficult withal, and yet so graceful, which M. Jourdain in vain labored to attain from his "maître de danse," with its exaggeration of compliment: "Beautiful marquise, your bewitching eyes make me die of love," has passed away with the revolution of '93. It was well it did, for it required the agility and muscle of a rope-dancer to preserve at once one's politeness and equilibrium. We have, however, a series of bows in the social ladder, from that of the Marshal of France to the gamin of the quartier St. Antoine, worthy of the study of a connoisseur of manners. We have caught a few as they passed on the side-walk, and transferred them to our menagerie of Sights and Principles

Here we have the bow AUDACIOUS: this is the fate of every lady who has the courage to walk the streets of Paris unattended by a gentleman. Not that she need fear open insult or positive rudeness; but it is the universal experience of



womankind in Paris, whether with or without pretensions to youth and beauty, to receive in the street equivocal compliments from the male sex. All this may seem, and is undoubtedly, very rude; nevertheless, it is very common. The slightest notice would draw further attention from these experienced roués, while a correct and cool deportment is always sure to command respect and forbearance when they discover their mistake. They view the streets of Paris as the poacher does the seignorial shooting-grounds—as a great game range,



NATURAL—STIFF.



PROUD—SAD.



GALLANT, AND NOT UNCOMMON.



UNQUIET—MISERABLE.



GOOD-NATURED—INSULTING—BENEVOLENT—COLD—HUMILIATING—HUMBLE.

in which they are willing to risk being shot for the sake of occasionally pocketing a bird.

While upon this topic, an anecdote charmingly illustrative and delightfully piquant occurs to me. The lady was *not* handsome, middle-aged, a prude, yet prompted by vanity to construe as gallantry such attentions as fell in her way. As she enjoyed the reputation of piety, she replied to her supposed tempters by quotations from Holy Writ, and general axioms on the beauty of virtue and naughtiness of vice. A gentleman, who, by the way, was half crazy, but sane enough to appreciate her weakness, wrote to her repeatedly, desiring an interview, as he had something of importance to communicate. *Her* waggish friends suggested that it must be a person of rank desperately enamored of her. She accordingly planned at once her revenge and deliverance from his amorous persecutions. Putting on her most attractive dress, she curled her hair anew, and laid in fresh stock of moral precepts and irresistible arguments, taking care to have *her* friends in ambush to witness her triumph.

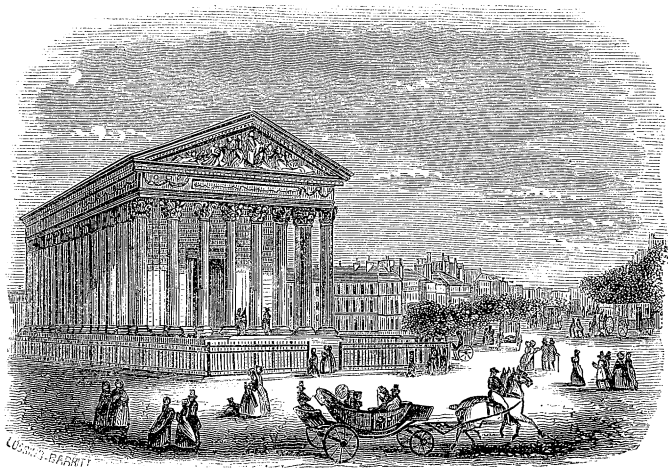
Her visitor was announced, punctual to her appointment. He was not less than sixty, and with a wandering eye that betokened an eccentric brain. "Madame," said he, abruptly, "I have a declaration to make to you. I wish to inform you of something I deem necessary for you to know. Have the goodness not to interrupt me, Madame, because I have come here to render you a service. I have seen, ah! le diable! the strange figures of valetudinarians, sick people, convalescent, and the dying at the mineral waters. How drolly they dress when they bathe; they have the most inconceivable head-dresses and outrageous robes—" "But, sir, what interest can I take—" "Madame, you are continually interrupting me. Stop—you may believe me if you will, but I give you my word that I have never seen any woman so singularly, and, permit

me to add, so badly dressed as you are." "Leave me, sir : you are a fool." "Not at all, Madame ; and I have come here to counsel you not to coiffure yourself, nor dress any more after such a horrible manner. All the expense of your toilet is money lost." By this time Madame was speechless with rage and mortification. It required considerable address on the part of her friends to persuade the critic to leave, which he at last did, comforting her with the parting assurance that her figure was too gross and common to have any pretensions to elegance.

CHAPTER III.

THE BOULEVARDS AND BATHS OF PARIS.

THE Boulevards of Paris may be compared to the beautiful setting of a valuable gem. Along their circuitous course circulates the gay and brilliant life of this sparkling metropolis. Not that these celebrated avenues are uniformly fashionable, although uniformly broad and spacious, shaded with trees, and bounded on either side by buildings whose architectural beauties might well excite the envy of less favored capitals. Commencing at the central point of attraction, the Madeleine, they



THE MADELEINE.

stretch away on their winding course around what constituted

the city of the "well-beloved" Louis, at every turn baptized anew with names that have now grown classical, sweeping over the site of the Bastille southerly, then westerly encircling the Latin Quarter, the Luxembourg, and the Faubourg St. Germain, sidling by the Invalides until they are arrested by the Seine and Champs Elysées, which separate them from the spot whence we started. Condensed within this circuit are the extremes of all that makes life desirable or burdensome : wealth that would astonish Cræsus, luxury that would have driven Lucullus to despair, and misery sufficient to people hell with woe. It is not of the interior of this labyrinth of stone and flesh that I would now write, for it would require more words than Omar burned to record its history, but merely to invite the reader to follow me in a hasty drive around that portion of the Boulevards where he will find most to amuse and bewilder. Failing as words must be to convey a daguerreotype sketch of this varied scene, I have pressed into my service wherewithal to aid the reader's imagination and supply my deficiency ; for if there are some scenes in nature whose beauty requires the aid of canvas to convey them to the brain, there are others of stirring humanity so complex and artificial as to equally baffle all verbal description.

Americans, fresh from New York, are prone to institute a comparison, particularly in width, between Broadway and the Boulevards. The former is certainly a very respectable avenue, fringed with many fine buildings, and as noisy, dirty, and confused as the most devoted Gothamite could desire. Such diversity in costume and show in equipage as republican simplicity or aristocratic taste admit, are to be seen here. Female beauty and vanity, and male coxcombry, have chosen it for their favorite kingdom ; rags and mendicancy dog their steps and haunt its corners. The shops are rich in display, but lacking in taste, and there is a universal hurry, roar of omnibuses,

rush of pedestrians, dust in dry weather, and mud in wet weather, that makes the denizen of the Fifth Avenue or the rural citizen as much rejoiced to escape from its whirl, as the seaman of Norway from the perilous Maelstrom of his inhospitable coast. To saunter in Broadway is out of the question. A walk is but a succession of jostlings, elbow-chafings, or a hoisting and contorting of the body, and active use of the nether members to avoid collision, that leaves one, by the time he has arrived at the Battery, very much under the impression that he has been stretched upon the rack to test its excruciating powers. A peep into a shop window is an invitation to a pick-pocket; to cross the street requires as much skill as to conduct "the retreat of the Ten Thousand;" and to get home again, sound in wind and whole in purse, after having undergone the gauntlet of its innumerable perils, is as much a matter of devout thanksgiving as to escape being boiled, burned, or drowned in a steam-boat trip up the Hudson. Broadway is a plethora of metropolitan nuisances, and the City Fathers will find, at last, that there is but one remedy: either to double its width, or to make a twin avenue, running parallel, and thus divide its overloaded circulation. Paris has effected this reform, in a much-needed quarter, at a cost of several millions of dollars, in the elongation of the Rue de Rivoli, ruthlessly cutting through the densest and most valuable property of the city for this purpose.

The width of the Boulevards, double, and in places treble that of Broadway, gives ample scope for the pedestrians. Besides, a Parisian crowd flows on as easily and noiselessly as the current of a deep river. The doctrine of individual rights, irrespective of sex, is scrupulously respected, and any physical infringements promptly met by a courtesy that leaves behind no more uncomfortable reminiscence than the politeness of the unintentional aggressor. One *can* saunter on the Boule-

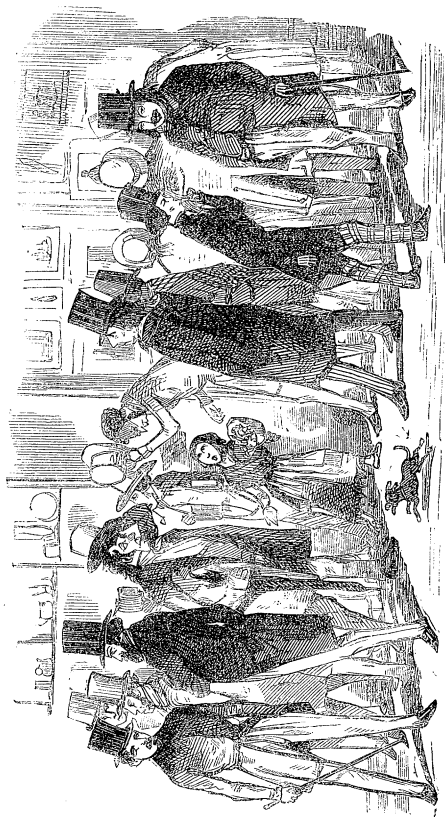
wards. They are the empire of the curious, the vain, the idler of every fashionable class, and the El Dorado of shoppers. Along its stone boundaries, ornate without, and so rich in all the luxuries of life within, are to be found the homes of every taste, carnal or intellectual, and a devout Catholic might add spiritual, if the sensual worship of the Madeleine can be classed under that head. Well do the Boulevards merit their fame. Once the bulwark of Paris, they have now become its parterre of fashion. Along its Macadamized way, as smooth as a jointed floor, constantly watered and swept, and lined on either side with shade-trees, roll noiselessly by thousands of gay equipages, brilliant with the wealth and beauty of the capital of the world. No clatter of iron-loaded trucks or unsightly piles of merchandise jar inharmoniously upon the ear, or disfigure its beautiful proportions. The scene is ever in keeping with its purposes as the focus of Parisian life. Morning and evening, regiments march by, preceded by bands from whose instruments swells a loud chorus of inspiring strains. The unrivalled airs of the Opera here greet the ear of this mingling tide of nations. Embassadors and princes, the nobility and bankers of Europe, they to whom fortune has suddenly entered their doors, to be as speedily thrown out of the windows, here do congregate to exhibit their style, to outshine all competitors, and to levy the indispensable tribute of envy and eye-worship. Costume is not here confined, as in Broadway or Regent Street, to the same graceless hat and dull black cloth, varied only in the first by the butterfly attire of the "ladies" of creation, and in the latter by their inextinguishable bad taste, but comprises the flowing Arab robe, the stately Ottoman turban, the decorations and uniforms of every order and army in Europe, all that is strange or picturesque in provincial or national garb, and all that is tasteful and charming in female attire. Here every fashion finds itself a home, intermingling

with the native grace of wild flowers and attractiveness of cultivated plants in one bouquet of humanity—a peaceful congregation of nations for the cultivation of the lust of the eye and pride of the heart.

The contrasts in the *life* of the Boulevards are as striking as those of a human being. They have their grave and gay moments, their chaste and licentious hours, their solitude and their tumult. At seven o'clock in the morning, all is silent. The shops are shut, the very hackmen are dozing on their boxes. A footstep resounds ominously on the pavement. By eight o'clock a few carriages are in motion, porters begin to stir, occasional workmen in blouses go merrily singing to their toil. At nine o'clock the sidewalks are washed and brushed, shop-windows opened, the grisettes begin to appear, and an occasional frock-coat, but evidently as much out of its element as a fresh-caught flounder. Even at ten o'clock Parisian households are like so many oysters in their shells. At eleven, the world of business stirs; at mid-day, the Boulevards breakfast, and the buyers begin to inspect the windows, and tax the endurance of clerks. From two to five the current of life is in its apogee. Humanity, well dressed and elaborately adorned, is abroad to sun itself—to relieve its pent-up humors by gazing upon the holiday expression of its neighbor man, and to catch and reflect back the universal look of outer satisfaction. There is no despotic rule of cloth here. It is the jubilee of fashions and the paradise of manners. All are at their ease, and there are as many cuts to a coat and shapes to a hat as there are fancies to their owners. Rigid toilets are banished to the more pretending Champs Elysées. Women, “*comme il faut*,” shop, but never promenade on the Boulevards. Their finished elegance and graceful recognitions are reserved for the more aristocratic crowd.

Later in the day, the restaurant and café world are in the

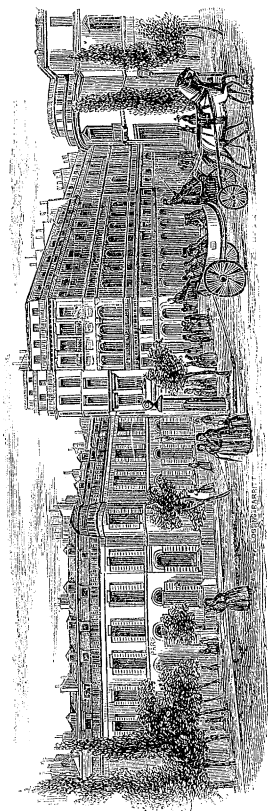
ascendant. The *diners* are in rapid circulation, dividing their attention and purses between the localities so firmly fixed in the gastronomic memory of every "gourmet." Cheap dinners



THE BOULEVARDS BETWEEN TWO AND FIVE O'CLOCK.

are not to be had under the shadow of the "Maison Dorée," that wilderness of gilding and bizarre finish, nor yet within the Café Cardinal, of which the basement alone rents for forty

thousand francs. For these, the more democratic shades of the Palais Royal must be sought, shunning the Scylla of Véry's and the Trois Frères Provencaux, which have shipwrecked as

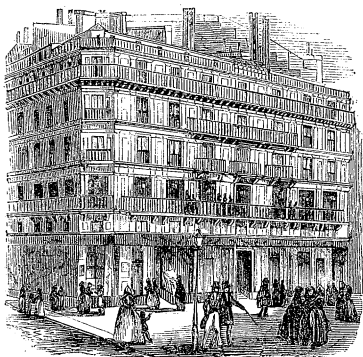


MAISON DORÉE.

many purses as any other of their tribe in more brilliant localities. The *dined* now fill the chairs on the side-walks at two sous each, in front of the Café de Paris and other kindred

quarters, sipping black coffee and clear brandy, eating ices, or drinking beer, gossiping and gazing in the intervals. They are soon joined by their families, women and children, as much at home in the open air as any Englishman in his "castle." Gas now adds its light to the brilliant scene, and reflectors outside of the shop-windows pour their concentrated brilliancy upon gems and jewels that rival any in store in Aladdin's cave. The Boulevards at night are in a blaze of light. It is then that they appear to the best advantage. The world, having dined, has become good-natured. Every one is abroad for pleasure. Opera and theatres are attracting their worshipers in crowds. Electrical lights lend their dubious brilliancy to the varied spectacle, dancing upon street and wall the varied hues of the rainbow, coloring every countenance with ghastly blue, or shooting into the long distance a train of gradually-diminishing light, like the attenuated tail of a comet.

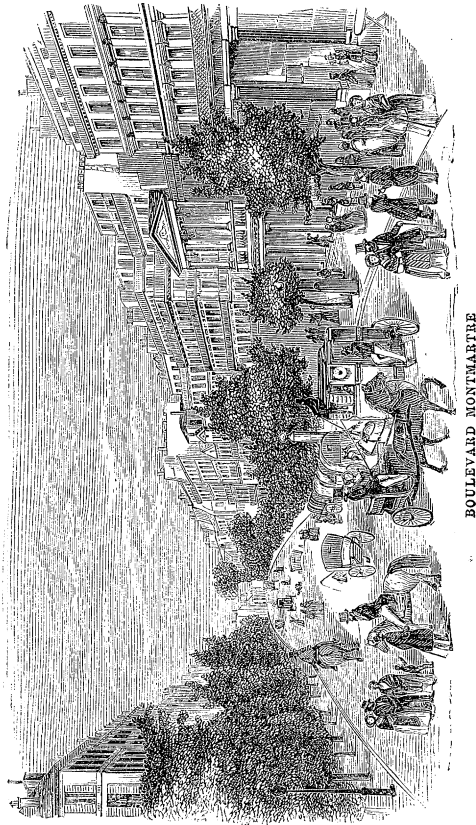
The "Maison du Grand Balcon" is a fine specimen of modern Parisian architecture, which comprises so great a variety of professions and professors under one roof. In it are shops which leave nothing to be desired in point of magnificence—apartments fit for a prince, bachelor, or grisette. Elegance, refinement, vir-



MAISON DU GRAND BALCON.

tue, poverty, and vice can each find a home, at its price, in one of these habitations. Their external appearance is no criterion of what may be found within; the convenient neighborly blindness, or indifference to individual acts, which pervades

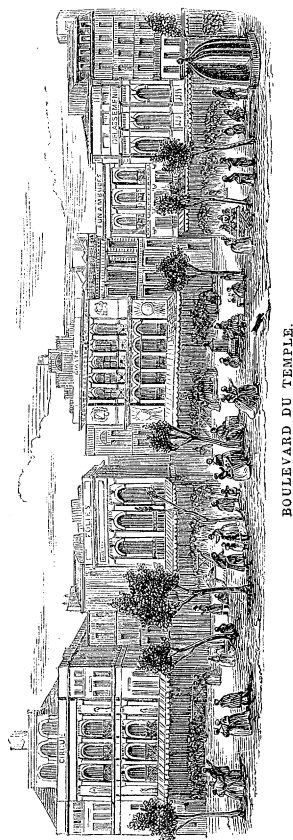
the French metropolis, so unlike the prying curiosity and personal interest of American and English society, leave as much latitude of action, provided external decorum is not infringed as the most isolated heart could desire.



BOULEVARD MONTMARTRE

Passing the Boulevard Montmartre, fashion and elegance begin slowly to decline. The buildings are still beautiful, but

the foot-passengers indicate a gradual approach to the manufacturing regions of St. Antoine and the Jewish colonies of the Temple. Here are congregated, in close proximity, the low-



priced theatres, where, for a franc or less, the canaille indulge their taste for spectacles, and their lungs in every variety of noise that makes the drama hideous. They smoke, babies

scream, nurses jabber, nuts are cracked, fruit devoured, and from six o'clock until midnight, riot and happiness, under the supervision of the gendarmes, pervade the scene. These the-



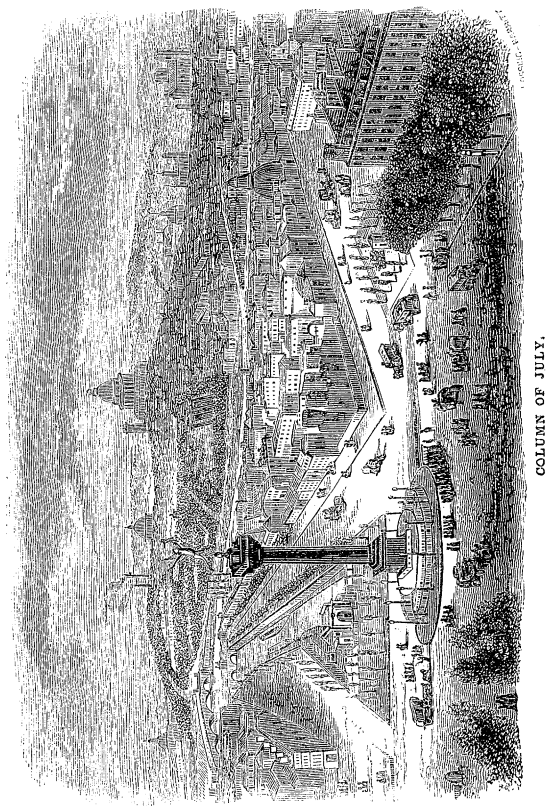
THE FAIR.

atres are the lyceums of the poorer classes, the schools of their manners, the forum of their eloquence—in short, the all they know of the world outside of their work-shops, except the elementary education of the dram-shop. Villainous corn brandy,

and debasing theatricals, enter largely into the physical and mental training of the lower orders. Yet degradation among them has not the repulsive, criminal aspect that it has among the corresponding class of English society. It does not extinguish self-respect. Their vanity outlives every other sentiment; and this, combined with their inexhaustible "bonhomie," makes them the sensual, live-for-to-day race that we find them. They may be dirty, ragged, ferocious, or fanciful in their exteriors—a race of "tigers pitted with the small-pox," or combining all the hideous ugliness of dress and person of Marat, yet over all is thrown that air of individual humor and importance that never forsakes a Parisian, and secures for him, even in the lowest stage of existence, a medium position between the brutalized poverty of Ireland and the comfortable indigence of America.

The world of the Boulevards, which has become in this region somewhat vulgar, revives again somewhat as we approach the Column of July. Still, it is a very different world from that of the Boulevard de la Madeleine, although strictly Parisian in every feature. It has lost its brilliancy, but has acquired in its place an air of comfort and independence. It is the Bowery *versus* Broadway. Those catchalls of human vanity, the magazine of the debris of fashion, luxury, arts, and folly, the "*bric-à-brac*" shops, are numerous. We are in the region of cheap rents and bargains. Fashion has not here invaded thrift and economy. Her glitter is seen in the perspective, and her repudiated garments or prodigal spillings can be had in this quarter for a song. A short walk and a moderate sum will put one in possession of an apartment, regal in extent and decayed grandeur, in the very centre of the "court-end" of the Medicean queens, the Place Royal, now republicanized into the Place des Vosges. For a neighbor he would have the Hôtel de Carnavalet and all the charming associa-

tions connected with the “esprit” and talent of Madame de Sévigné, who here reigned sovereign of wit and refinement, and composed those letters which have immortalized her



name. Beyond the Seine the Boulevards maintain their width, their trees, their stateliness, and majesty. But it is no longer the majesty of Paris. It is the reign of the country:

quiet, shady avenues, removed from the turmoil and excitement of the city, yet keeping in view Nôtre Dame, the Garden of Plants, the Wine-market, in which there is liquor enough stowed to float a navy, the Quaker-like Ile Saint Louis, that *city* of the sick and insane, the "Salpêtrière," that grandiloquent mass of stone and mortar, the Pantheon, and terminating at the tomb of Napoleon and the home of his veterans.

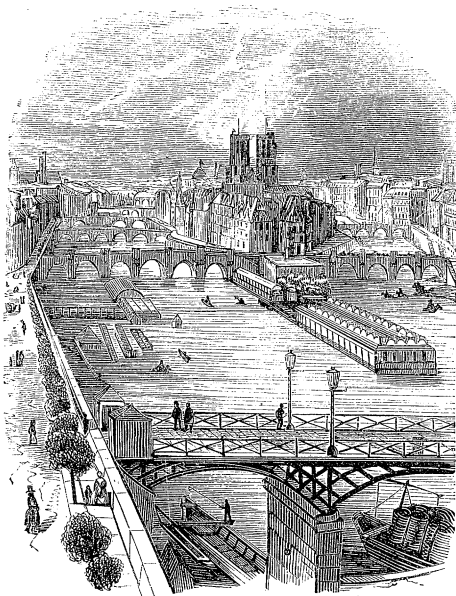
The historical associations of the Boulevards are of a recent date and comparative insignificance. Fieschi has given an assassin's celebrity to the house No. 50, on the Boulevard du Temple, and in that of the Capucines we gaze with mournful interest upon the hotel once occupied by Madame du Barri. It was here, while on her way to execution, that she asked the driver of the fatal cart to pause for a moment, that she might once more view that beautiful monument of her pride and her shame. While Death was counting the few remaining moments of her life, she was looking regretfully back upon the deceptive pleasures of her sensuous career. How many there are of her sex at the present hour who barter virtue for still more ephemeral luxury, passing daily, in their brilliant equipages, this house, which, if they ever bestowed a thought upon its former occupant, might become to them at once a lesson and a warning! To complete the moral, the cart which conveyed her to the scaffold should crown its gateway, with her last despairing cry for life, as she struggled in the executioner's hands, inscribed upon its frame.

The Boulevards are a panorama only of modern Paris. To see at one glance the past with the present, we must turn to the banks of the Seine. It is here that are most powerfully realized the pulsations of the strong heart of this mural monster, with its condensation of life and death. The past stares upon us from the towers of Nôtre Dame, looks up from the

dungeons of the Conciergerie, gazes askant from the blood-soaked pavement of the Place de Grève, charitably opens the doors of the Hôtel Dieu, and, with mingled shame and pride, displays the Louvre, Tuileries, and the Hôtel de Ville. The present rejoices in its magnificent quays, crowded on either side with noble specimens of architecture, rich in the accumulated learning and science of ages. The abode of the saintly Louis, now the Palace of Justice, the Holy Chapel, with its medieval treasures and saintly relics, the venerable Institute, and a long line of palaces, overshadow the waters of the Seine. Here, too, are the relics of olden time—quaint old houses, whose roofs sheltered the partisans of the Fronde. A motley and curious blending of what has become and is to be history does the Seine present. It is as if Time had swept into one heap the living and the dead. The current of the former runs healthy and strong. Unlike the Boulevards, it is not simply a sparkling, playful stream, on the bosom of which one can with equal ease leisurely float or quickly glide, but a deep, dense, full current of working life, hurrying rapidly on to its destiny. Those who seek its quays are baited by an object. Men do not come here to lounge, nor women for display. They avoid it until necessity, or with them equally imperious pleasure, draws them into its vortex. Yet in no part of Paris is the living world more full of variety and interest. The noble bridges that at short intervals span the Seine afford from their parapets far more interesting sights than those of the Thames. There, every thing must be seen through an atmosphere of coal-dust: a muddy river and muddier bed; dingy buildings; black, graceless steamers; a black forest of masts; huge columns of black smoke pouring incessantly upward from spectre-like chimneys; black coats and black hats—every thing dark, heavy, and gloomy. A pall seems spread over the public edifices, and suspended in the air. One glance shows the Thames in all its

unpicturesque monotony, as it has been, is, and ever will be while London sky continues to be a solution of fog and smoke.

Not so on the Seine. Its sun is a bright, gladdening sun. Under its influence, its banks grow gay with life and light. Its prospects are ever changing and attractive. The stone embankments confine its bed to a deep, strong stream, leaving no

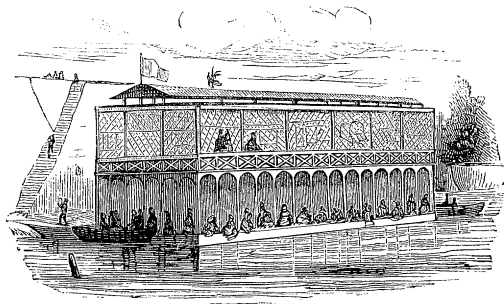


VIEW FROM THE QUAY OF THE LOUVRE

margin for mud, or the ordinary nuisances of a river intersecting a city. Where space permits, trees, grass, and flowers flourish, contrasting sweetly with the gray stone about them. The atmosphere is brilliantly clear. The landings are scrupulously neat. Every species of merchandise and marketing has its distinct place. The batteaux, miniature steamers, boats,

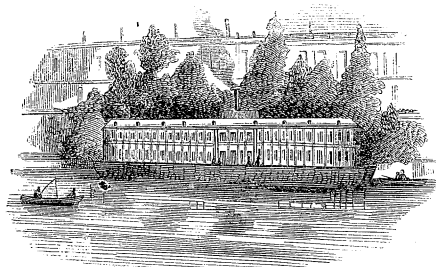
and rafts, seem all to be arranged for a picturesque effect. There is no crowding. Each has ample space, and the whole form a river-scene unexcelled in its artificial accompaniments by the hand of man elsewhere.

The Parisian loves the Seine as the Venetian loves the Adriatic and the Hollander his dikes and marshes. The poor Lutèce, which gave birth to the present city, was two thousand years since but a miserable hamlet of fishermen. A petty tribe of savages gained a scanty subsistence from what was then a thick forest or treacherous morass. The aquatic taste and origin of the founder of Paris are perpetuated in the present arms of the city, a vessel under sail, and on the collars of the municipal police will be found embroidered this craft as a distinctive badge. What the codfish is to Massachusetts, the Seine is to Paris—the source and emblem of its prosperity. Its waters sustain the living and receive the despairing. Deprive Parisians of charcoal and the Seine, and suicide would be at a loss for a weapon. It supplies Paris with drinking water—a fluid, however, not much in request. The sewers discharge their filthy currents into its stream, yet the washerwomen hesitate not to moor their mammoth establishments in close proximity to these subterranean outlets, and



WASHING ESTABLISHMENT.

contrive to return linen of unimpeachable purity. Some of these floating wash-tubs are vast, airy, and constructed in very agreeable shapes, like the mosques of the Bosphorus, or are prettily painted, and surmounted with a drying-room, shut in by trellis-work, after the Oriental style.

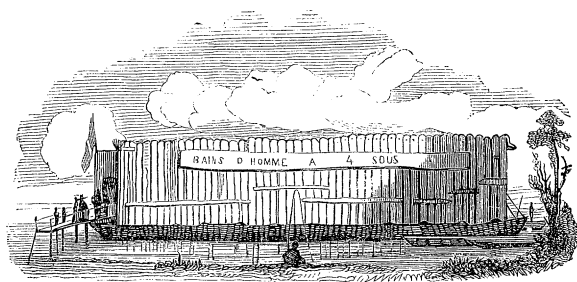


PARISIAN BATHING-HOUSE.

But what strikes the stranger with greatest surprise, in view of the scavenger duties of the Seine, is the number, beauty, and extent of the bathing-houses along its banks. They merit

more than a passing notice.

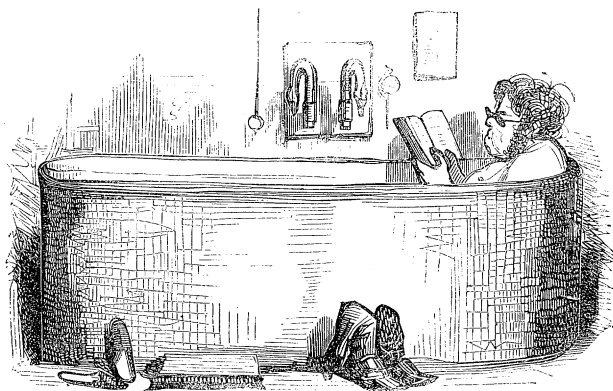
Commencing with those of the most humble description, where, for four sous, the bather has the liberty only of a plunge



BATHS FOR FOUR SOUS.

into the dubious stream, towels, drawers, and soap extra, but rarely called for, they gradually increase in elegance and price until they leave nothing more to be desired in this species of luxury. Monsieur, selecting his "cabinet," ensconces himself

in the depths of the bathing-tub, not simply for a bath, but to take his snuff, read, and doze for the hour together. He makes

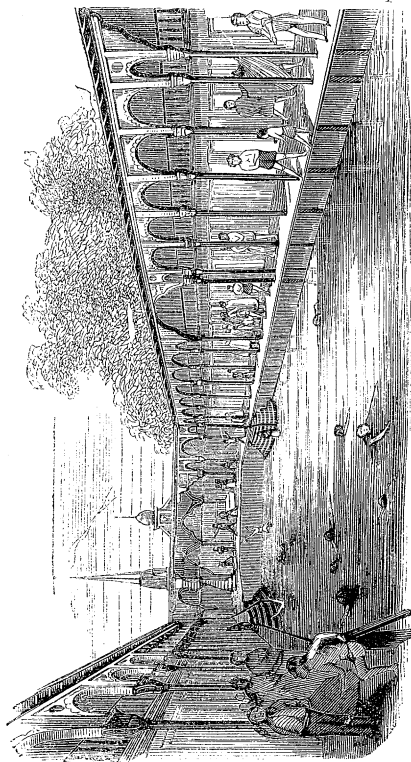


BATHING AT EASE.

and remakes his bath, nicely graduating the temperature to his varying and delightful sensations. But his happiness would be incomplete if he could not bestow upon a neighbor, at his option, any sudden overflow of volubility. Consequently, at the head of every tub there is arranged a slide in the partition, opening into the adjoining room. By pushing this back he is able to communicate his thoughts and exhibit his profile to his similarly engaged neighbor. He finds even this social arrangement frequently too restricted for his notions of the perfect enjoyment of a bath, and has devised *double-tubbed* cabinets, upon the principle of our double-bedded hotel rooms, where he can have the sympathizing society of his friend. The first bathing-house I saw on this plan was in London. Upon expressing my surprise, the proprietor assured me that he had so arranged them for the convenience of Frenchmen, who preferred bathing in couples. Having since seen so many operations of the toilet and matters of private or domestic econ-

omy performed openly in the public places of Paris, I have ceased to be astonished at even this predilection. Indeed, I have come to the conclusion that a Frenchman believes it impossible for him to appear at disadvantage under any circumstances connected with his physical self; or else the gregarious instinct, as with certain animals, is stronger within him than what are considered by his neighbors over the Channel among the proprieties of life.

The swimming-schools for both sexes are upon a scale of



SWIMMING-SCHOOL ON THE SEINE.

grandeur and luxury in no whit behind the baths. The art of living is a very comprehensive branch of Parisian knowledge. Every sensual gratification is refined upon to its fullest extent. Life is a struggle to extract and elaborate pleasure from every object perceptible to the senses, so that to know how to live has, in the estimation of a Parisian, attained the dignity of an art. He is right so far as the innocent gratifications of the varied capacities of enjoyment bestowed upon man by a beneficent Creator are concerned. It is right that we should study to cultivate, refine, and multiply our sources of pleasure. It becomes criminal, however, when the physical supplants the spiritual, and happiness is made to consist in a succession of physical excitements or sensual extravagances, by which the constitution is gradually undermined, the mental sensibility blunted, and moral discrimination destroyed. Frenchmen, however, understand too well the physical economy to exhaust life. They carefully conserve it, that it may be to them an unfailing source of enjoyment to the last. The great age in general attained by their aristocracy, though submerged, as it were, in a sea of luxury, attests this fact. We would not deny them either the existence of a higher principle in this prolonged conservation of health than the mere training of the system to preserve its tone and power for physical enjoyment. Still, no one can penetrate life at Paris without a painful consciousness that its idols are those of the flesh and not of the spirit—external gratification rather than inward peace. The enjoyment of life is imbibed. It is strong upon the surface, but weaker as it penetrates the interior. Instead of radiating from the heart, it is received upon the skin. Antiquity has no ecstasy to bequeath to it. Even Orientalism can borrow from its voluptuous stores. It repudiates the barbarous vices of paganism, but revels in the softer and more seductive charms of modern atheism, practically denying eternity, that it may wor-

ship only time. Paris extorts from every American and Englishman the inconsistent sentiment that, while they love to live amid its delights, yet they would regret to have their native cities resemble it.

But I am forgetting the more amusing pictures of life and manners in these swimming-schools. The early morning hours are occupied by those who come simply for the love of the art. They swim, eat a modest breakfast, and depart. Succeeding them, toward noon, are the Sardanapaluses and the Balthazars of the school, the gross citizens who come less to bathe than to breakfast. The water is nearly deserted. The fumes of punch, and coffee, and cigars fill the atmosphere. The ear is stunned with the explosion of Champagne corks, and the cries "Garçon, my beefsteak! Quick with my chicken sauté." "Voilà! voilà!" After breakfast, a lounge or siesta upon the floor or benches. Some go to the swimming-school as they would to a masked ball, eccentrically clad, or rather wrapped, as Arabs, Turks, Greeks, or Poles.

The café of the swimming-school, of which the "comptoir" is always kept by a woman—in some instances the "garçons" are women also—is filled with an eating, drinking, and smoking nude crowd. Cold water is a famous stomachic. One would suppose, from the specimens of the human figure here exhibited, that these "dames" would forthwith bury themselves deep in the recesses of the remotest convent, that such apparitions might never more greet their view. Grog, absynth, Madeira, and cigars are called for with furious haste.

At six o'clock the lions deliver themselves into the hands of their hair-dressers and corn-cutters, preparatory to their conquests upon the Boulevards and Champs Elysées, and to dine long and sumptuously at Véfour's, the Trois Frères Provençaux, or the Maison Dorée. The aquatic taste of some of the bathers changes frequently the café of the school into a res-



PREPARATION FOR CONQUEST.

taurant, and they remain here to dine, gazing without constraint, in their simple costume of drawers, upon the animated scene before them. With the thermometer at 90° in the shade, one can readily conceive the charm of relinquishing broadcloth for the scanty garb of a Tahitian, relieving the te-

dium of a dinner, and stimulating the appetite by an occasional plunge into the cool river.

The women have also their baths at four sous, at which, be it observed to their credit, on their own testimony, however, they preserve an exterior decency not to be seen in the corresponding class of bathing-houses among the males. The female bathing-costume is much the same as that in use at Newport and Cape May. Occasionally are added ruffled night-caps and coiffed hair, which are said to have, as can readily be conceived, a horrible effect. The most coquettish embroider their "pantalons" in different colors, and wear in the water their bracelets and necklaces. The advantage of costume, as compared



EN COSTUME.

with the male bathers, is decidedly with the female, though even among them, it must be ungallantly confessed, that the modiste's art performs wonders. The

café scenes of the male schools are not rivaled in the female.



NYMPHS OF THE SEINE.



READY FOR THE PLUNGE.

Whatever emulation exists of this nature is confined to the heroines of gallantry and opulent pleasure, who hold their bacchanal revels apart. As I have lifted the veil from the male bathers, impartial justice requires at my hands the same toward the female. Voici! As on the pavement, beauty, grace, and harmony mingle with age, obesity, and ugliness—the most delicious with the most grotesque and amusing image. Forgive me, shade of

Mohammed! But 'tis true, and pity—'tis true.

CHAPTER IV.

SOCIETY AND SHOPPING.

So susceptible were the Athenians to the influences of material beauty, and the subtle intoxication of the senses, that it is said their judges listened only to the pleadings of certain orators in the dark, for fear that their judgments should be biased by the more powerful eloquence of their extreme comeliness, made doubly effective by the winning artifices of the accomplished speakers. This may readily be credited of the court that turned aside justice at the artful *exposé* of the charms of a courtesan. The Greeks were indeed a race prone to the liveliest emotions. Specious eloquence easily swayed or excited them, under the shadows of those glorious forms of architectural and statuesque beauty upon which the world, for more than two thousand years, has placed the verdict of perfection, while transmitting them to posterity under the honorable appellation of Grecian Art. The mantle of their sympathy with that beauty that appeals so powerfully to the physical and intellectual, creating from each a species of worship, has fallen, in these times, upon Frenchmen. Greece only, of the nations of antiquity, was able to give birth to those brilliant combinations of beauty, grace, and wit, which enthralled alike the philosophy of Socrates and the statesmanship of Pericles, and made the wisdom and talent of that nation more submissive to the caprices of a harlot than to the virtues of a wife. Lais and Aspasia have left names as imperishable as the genius of the people whose society they adorned, but whose morals

they corrupted. France alone, of modern nations, has developed a kindred class of women. Ninon de l'Enclos and Marion Delorme inherited alike the accomplishments and vices of their Grecian sisters, and it is only in French history or the annals of Greece that such reputations could have achieved immortality. Their beauty would have found worshipers every where, but their intellectual fascinations and epicurean refinements of corruption would have failed elsewhere to make them the queens of submissive coteries of wealth, rank, and talent. Rome, true to its solitary instinct of force, was capable of adding a Julia or Messalina to its coarse and repulsive career of debauchery, while the merry monarch of modern England was compelled to borrow from Paris the female name that most graced and disgraced the orgies of his reign. We would as soon look for the tropic bird in the sea of Okotsk as for a Diana de Poitiers in the snows of Russia. The loves of her women are nearer allied to Roman lust than Parisian grace. Edinburgh and Boston dispute the title of modern Athens, but it is in literature and philosophy alone; while Paris, in every feature that constitutes a proud, gay, intellectual, and magnificent capital, and, above all, in the skeptical, pleasure-loving, beauty-worshiping, sensuous character of its population, can justly assert its pre-eminence in all those qualities that have made the metropolis of Attica celebrated through all time. This affinity between the inhabitants of these two cities is not a discovery of the present century; it was noticed by the sharp-witted philosophers of the last. But they failed to observe one feature in which the women of Paris can happily claim a proud distinction. This they owe to the spiritualizing doctrines of Christianity. If their sex have illustrated the brilliant union of mere beauty with intellect, they have also produced characters, of equal attractions in these points, guided by the maxims of a purer morality than Greece ever knew,

and subjected to the severer discipline of Christian truth. Paris can rival Athens in all that made her women the companions of her men; but the glory of Athens rose and set too soon to allow her to receive the only doctrine which had power to purify it, and render it permanent.

Women, then, possessing education, beauty, and wit, maintain an empire in Paris unequalled elsewhere in extent and influence; but it is not a power which abides because once possessed. To maintain its conquests, unremitting care is required. Woman reigns supreme, but her supremacy depends upon her legitimate attractions. The beauty of a French woman is not so strongly characteristic as that of an English woman, German, Italian, or Spanish. It may, but rarely does, possess the delicacy of the American, although it often combines the clear complexion, dark hair, and piercing or soft blue eyes of the others. It is more of a mosaic than that of other countries. But its strength lies rather in her "esprit;" this is never extinguished. Some women drop their beauty as they do a garment—all at once; from being superb they become hideous. Others lose it by degrees, and gracefully fall back from embonpoint to their hair, from hair to teeth; these gone, the brilliant, speaking eyes remain, conserving still all their triumphs. As they lose their lustre, and the figure its elasticity, most women withdraw from society, as being too dilapidated to add to its attractions, or receive from it enjoyment. Not so with French ladies. They skillfully conceal the assaults of time by the arts of the toilet, and retain their power, and, if possible, become more attractive, by their inexhaustible "esprit," into the "spirituel" depths of which they plunge as into a fountain of youth. The respect and attention paid to age is delightful to witness. Society is not made up merely of thoughtless youth, whose highest aim is amusement, but parents take the lead, and children are content to follow their



A CHARMER AT SIXTY.

guidance. The art of conversation, as well as that of dancing, is cultivated, and soirées and receptions give scope to more elevating exchange of thoughts than mere gossip or chit-chat. It requires intellectual effort to maintain a good footing in Parisian society. One must know something, or be a lion, however small. Grace of figure and skill of legs are not the only needful accomplishments. Society in which the souvenirs of Mlle. de la Fayette, Madames Sévigné and Récamier are cherished, and a long list of names of either sex, illustrious in all that makes a drawing-room brilliant and attractive, is not content with the trite and commonplace. The past must be ransacked for its stores of wit, and the future anticipated in its progress. Who, then, is so well fitted to shine in Parisian so-

ciety as an experienced, intelligent woman? So long as she can enter a drawing-room, she never grows old; her memory becomes a treasury of anecdotes for the young, of wisdom for adults. Like Madame de la Cr  quy, at ninety-six years of age, she can at once retain the respectful admiration and gallantry of the Emperor Napoleon and the affection and respect of youth. It has been truly said that every statesman, artist, poet—in short, every man who has not passed some years in the intimacy of old Parisian women, has failed in his education of the world. Sooner or later, his life will resent this wrong.

The secret of their great superiority—so says L  on Gozlan, and I believe him—is easily explained. As they grow old, they preserve the delicacy of the woman, and acquire the good sense of a man. As the wine of which Homer speaks, they become honey by the virtue of their years. Living by reason alone, they are dead to the passions. No one deceives them; why should they? There is no longer call for coquetry, or any thing to gain by flattery. The solid charms of reason and wisdom gather about them a continual harvest of respect and attention. But this could not be, had she not prepared herself to be the guide, companion, and counselor of the young—a preparation not to be made by the weak instincts of American mothers, which banish them from society to the kitchen or nursery, leaving their sons and daughters, in all their inexperience and youthful ardor, to the unrestrained indulgence of their vanities and unfledged emotions, in the pernicious atmosphere of our juvenile ball-rooms. Let us have innocence and beauty at our social gatherings, but let them be chaperoned by parental care and experience. So shall society in America be redeemed from its frivolity to the higher purposes of intellectual entertainment, and parents and children have less reason to complain of mutual neglect.

I am aware that there is another phase to Parisian society

—one, if you please, of heartlessness and hypocrisy. But in these respects, is it worse than fashionable life every where? Parisian society is a firmament of worlds, each revolving in its own sphere. Pleasure and interest are the grand magnets of attraction in all. Balzac says there are reunions, but no society, at Paris. Perhaps he is right; but nowhere is there more enjoyment for the stranger. Provided he is properly presented, he can have a wide and varied circle of *entrées*. Once admitted, he is always at home. Introductions are un-



AT HOME.

necessary. It is not always necessary to know the host or hostess. One can enter or leave at his option—French leaves have become proverbial. They are convenient, certainly, to both parties. In this sort of “monde”—for at Paris Madame receives her “world,” if her callers be fewer in number than the satellites of Jupiter—tastes only are consulted in forming acquaintances. Within the walls of the salon the world assemble as friends, but part as strangers. “Egalité and fraternité” reign there in their true social sense, restrained only by sufficient courtesy to fuse all present into one “party of pleas-

ure." Your arm may encircle in the waltz the fairest waist in the room, and the tresses of the fairest hair droop languishingly on your shoulder; the tips of those delicate fingers may tremble within your own, but this does not authorize you to *know* Madame de ——— on the Boulevards, unless with her permission. The men of fashion fly from one salon to another on the same night—at home with every one—dancing here, conversing there, music at one, whist at another; but once in the street, and their memory of all but their associates is at once steeped in Lethe. And this is as it should be. While *in* society, each contributes his individual quota to the general enjoyment; while *out*, resuming his individual liberty and retirement. How awkwardly is this managed in the United States, where an introduction must follow every casual encounter, and mortal offense be taken at subsequent neglects, or forgetfulness of names which no memory of less capacity than a Biographical Dictionary can possibly retain. With a surplus of political freedom, there is less social liberty among Americans than any other nation.

Paris is pre-eminently the city of shopping. An entire nation caters to the vagaries of taste of a world, and this capital has become the grand magazine where centres every commodity luxury or necessity can devise. I can not, in conscience, add comfort, as this essential ingredient of human happiness, in the domestic Anglo-Saxon sense, is but imperfectly understood. It follows, then, that if shopping has attained the dignity of a passion with the fairer portion of humanity, as no husband, I opine, will be inclined to dispute, the shop-keeper's duties have equally bloomed into an *art*; a truth no wife will gainsay whose experience has been gained in this quarter. Napoleon reproached the English with being a nation of shop-keepers, and the eagerness of their descendants in the pursuit

of the dust or dollar has passed into a proverb throughout the world. But with either nation it is accompanied by an energy of purpose and general integrity that raises their mercantile character far above that of France. The love of the dollar there is quite as strong and universal, and the modes of securing it more diversified and ruinous to the conscience than in England or the United States. In love, success has been, since creation, the first article of Cupid's creed, and "all's fair in war" is an axiom common to every belligerent. To best describe the general trading character of France, I should fuse these two principles into one sentiment. So universal is this feeling of distrust and expectation of being defrauded, that it has resulted in the establishment of "shops of confidence," as exceptions to the universal rule. Some are all they pretend to be, while others have adopted the title, as many hypocrites profess religion, as so much additional capital of character. Travelers complain of the extortions of the Bedouins of the Desert, but they have far more reason to complain of the publicans and tradespeople of Paris, although in most instances the fleecing is so adroitly disguised by complimentary false words or lies of interest, that the particular operative is perceived only in the general depletion of the purse. Parisians themselves bewail the general corruption of their trading countrymen, and propensity to deceive strangers, as a short-sighted policy, by no means conducive to the true prosperity of their city. It is a sad truth that the standard of mercantile honor among the class referred to is lamentably low. In purchasing articles with the intention of sending them to the United States, I have, with scarcely an exception, been asked by the sellers if I did not wish a *false* invoice made out for the custom-house. This sort of cheating seems to be expected as a matter of course.

But that which foreign ladies are called upon to experience

is of a different character, and requires a combination of art and talent which leaves far in the rear the "cuteness" of the Yankee. The character of the customer is known the moment her foot enters the shop door. Her purse, desires, fantasies, weaknesses, and intentions are generally read at once by the experienced caterer to the wants and vanities of female life. If not read, they are decoyed on until the desired knowledge is extracted. A lady may enter, presuming she has sense, tastes, and opinions of her own, and, ten to one, she leaves doubly fortified in this opinion, while the flattery and deceitful eloquence of the clerk has, in reality, been her only guide in purchasing twofold more than she originally intended.

A rich English or American woman is the most desirable



A PARIS SALESMAN.

game for these Talleyrands of the counter. Balzac delightfully hits off the purse-bred nonchalance and counterfeit phlegm of the one, and the diplomacy of the other, in a sketch which is so true to life that I can not better illustrate this species of "shopping" than by giving the pith of it.

An English woman enters No. — Rue de ——. The clerk approaches her: "Does Madame wish an India or French shawl? high price or—"

"I will look at them."

"What sum does Madame consecrate to the purchase?"

"I will look at them," coldly scanning the clerk through her glass.

"Here are our finest qualities in red, blue, and orange. These are ten thousand francs. Here are some at three and five thousand."

The English woman examines them with indifference. "You have others?"

"Yes, Madame ; but perhaps Madame has not yet decided to take a shawl?"

"Oh, very decided."

The clerk disappears, and quickly returns with shawls of an inferior price. "These," says he, displaying them with great care and solemnity, at the same time giving an almost imperceptible but significant glance at his fellow-clerks, "these have not yet been displayed. They were brought by couriers directly from the manufacturers of Lahore."

"Ah! I understand. These suit me better. What is the price of this one in blue?"

"Seven thousand francs."

She puts it on, looks at herself in the glass, returns it, simply remarking, "I do not like it." Half an hour passes in similar fruitless essays.

"We have nothing more, Madame," says the clerk, looking at the head of the establishment.

"Madame is difficult, as are all persons of true taste," remarks the chief, as he advances toward her with all the graces of the shop concentrated in his manner. "I have still one shawl which has never been shown. No one has found it to their taste ; it is very bizarre, and this very morning I proposed to give it to my wife. We have had it since 1805. It belonged to the Empress Josephine."

"Let me see it, sir."

"Go and fetch it," orders the chief to his clerk. "It is at my house."

"I shall be very glad to see it," remarks the English woman.

"It cost sixty thousand francs in Turkey, Madame."

"Indeed!"

"It is one of the seven shawls sent by Selim, before his catastrophe, to the Emperor Napoleon. The Empress Josephine, a Creole, as my lady knows, and very capricious, exchanged it for one brought here by the Turkish ambassador, and purchased by my predecessor. I have never found a price for it, for in France our women are not rich enough. It is not so in England. Here it is, Madame."

The chief opens, with a little key, a square cedar box, the simple form of which makes a profound impression upon the lady. From this box, neatly folded up in black satin, he produces a shawl worth about fifteen hundred francs, yellow as gold, with black designs, of most extraordinary ugliness and oddity.

"Splendid!" exclaims the lady; "it is truly beautiful. It is my very ideal of a shawl."

"The Emperor Napoleon admired it greatly."

"It is very beautiful, fine, sweet!" exclaims the English woman, as the chief artfully and gracefully assists her to try it on. "Have you another?"

"I have one very fine," tranquilly replies the chief. "It came to me from a Russian princess, the Princess Narzikoff, who left it in payment for furnishings for her house. If Madame wishes to see it, she will find it a marvel of beauty. It is entirely new—has not been unpacked. There is not its equal in Paris."

"I wish much to examine it."

It is produced with even more mystery than the other, and the two shawls, worth three thousand francs, are sold for six thousand. The chief quietly selects another from his stock of old ones, to play anew the rôle of the Selim shawl in the cedar box, and patiently awaits the next English amateur of shawls.

CHAPTER V.

THE GRISETTES OF PARIS.

Who has not heard of the Parisian grisette? Yet who can correctly describe her? She is as distinctive a feature of its civilization as is slavery of our Southern States. Without childhood or age, whence comes she, and whither does she go? We always see her, as the bee, busily gathering honey for her little hive, or like the moth, scorching her wings in the flame that is destined, before long, to consume her. Sterne would have us believe that she is pretty, but there is a vast difference between a beautiful woman and a pretty grisette. The former may imitate the grisette, but the grisette can never become the fine woman. She must live and disappear a grisette. I do not say that she is born one, for I fancy her origin can, in general, be traced to those state nurseries, the foundling hospitals, and her disappearance into—God knows what; but I am fearful that the hospitals can disclose a fearful tale, and the river record many a fatal leap. Those who survive these dangers subside sometimes into delving matrimony, but oftener into that class of laborious, repulsive-looking females, who eke out a wretched existence in the highways and byways of Paris. But it is only of the grisette proper that I would speak, without whom the Quartier Latin, Chaumière, and the modiste's shop would equally be blanks, and the student's life a dull level of dry study. My fair readers must not suppose that I am introducing to their notice an entirely unworthy class of their sex. Far from it. Their faults are more the result of their misfor-



THE GRISETTE.

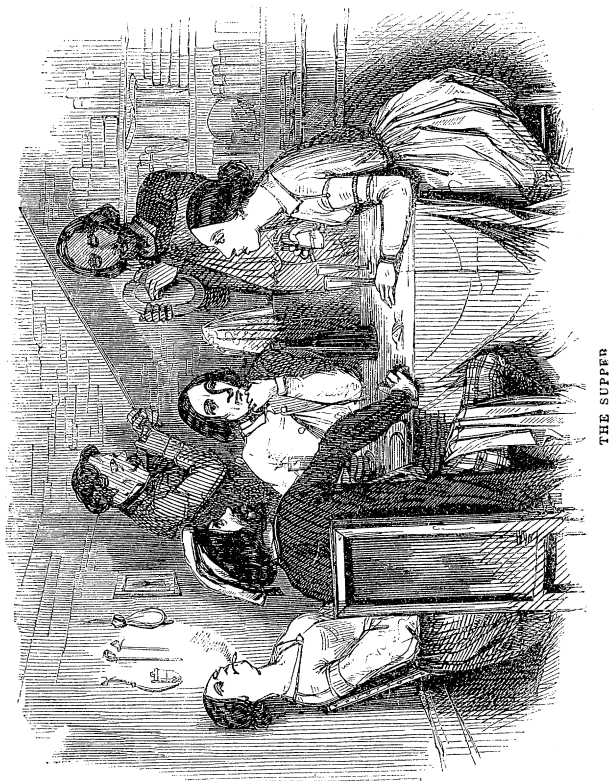
tunes than their depravity. They are the peculiar growth of Paris, and are no more to be blamed for their existence than the wild flowers that bloom but to die in the swamp or desert. Would you censure them because they have known no homes, or have been cradled only in a hospital, to be thrust in all their young beauty upon the world as soon as their fingers can earn the scanty measure of wine and bread that they call food? If, then, this be their destiny, is it surprising that the ephemeral constancy of a student or clerk should be to them domestic bliss, or the excitement of the dance and revel fill hours which would otherwise be heavy with despair? Even in their unsanctioned ties they have often solaced many a heart and sustained many a head that have later in life won honor for themselves and credit for their nation. Judge them, then, not too harshly. If their faults outweigh yours, it is not so certain but that their virtues may also. At all events, hear before you strike.

The dress of a grisette is an indescribable mixture of careless neatness, perfectly charming in the tout ensemble, modestly displaying the advantages of a good, or skillfully concealing the defects of a bad figure. Their bonnets, when they mount them, are coquettish morsels of pasteboard, covered with some fanciful stuff, and jauntily fitting on the back of their heads, leaving the sides and front exposed. Their prettiness is in their easy air of well-bred assurance and laughing features rather than in any regular pretensions to beauty. The privations of their eccentric existence are opposed to much true delicacy of outline. Their male friends estimate their virtues in the ratio of their fidelity, good figure, graceful dancing, and ability to withstand tobacco smoke. I can not better picture the class than by giving a few episodes of their usual lives.

Nanette and Fidèle, two belles in their way, are at a stu-

E

dents' supper. It is long and gay. The earnings and allowance of months are exhausted in as many hours. The messieurs commence with filling the chamber with smoke, in which operation Nanette assists. Fidèle proposes to relate



an adventure. Her intention is applauded, and silence succeeds the noisy chat.

“You know my two friends, Blanchette and Rougette.

Well, we three went to the Odeon the other night to see the new tragedy. Rougette had just inherited from her grandmother four hundred francs, which made us all feel like so many Rothschilds—I mean as rich. We took a pit box. Three students were in the parterre, who took it into their heads to invite us to supper, under the pretext that we were alone; so, without staying out the piece, we adjourned to Viot's with our unknown cavaliers. The garçon at first insisted that they had nothing, doubtful, I suppose, of the depth of our purse; but Rougette, who knew his ways, took the pen and ordered a regular marriage supper. Our self-made beaux made a slight face at this, but could not object with decency, you know.

“It was soon brought on—a supper good enough for a bride from St. Germain. We then commenced to play the fastidious ladies. Nothing was good. Hardly was one dish brought before we sent it back and ordered another. ‘Boy, take away this; it is intolerable. Where have you learned to make such horrors?’ Ortolans fared no better than omelets. Our unknown friends wished to eat, but we were too dainty to allow them time for that. Briefly, we grew uproarious, and smashed a lot of the dishes.

“Our fun was now at its height. We could hear our three gallants whispering to each other to know how they were to pay for our follies. One had but six francs, another still less, and the third only his watch, which he generously drew from his pocket. Their only remedy seemed to be to leave *us* in pledge. After the sample we had given of our habits, Viot would have been glad to escape such security. In this state of mind, they presented themselves at the bar to negotiate some delay. What do you think they replied to them?”

“We can't say, with such treacherous guests as you to provide for.”

“I will tell you. Rougette, before entering the cabinet, had paid all in advance. Imagine, then, their surprise at the answer of Viot, ‘Sirs, it is paid.’ Our three unknown friends looked at us as three dogs regard three bishops, with a piteous stupefaction that was perfectly delightful. Feigning not to notice it, we left the restaurant and ordered a carriage. ‘My dear Marquise,’ said Rougette to me, ‘we must conduct these gentlemen home.’ ‘Willingly, my dear Countess,’ I replied. They declined, but we were inexorable. They refused to give their address, but we knew that they lived in the street of the ‘cat that fishes.’ Escorting them to their lodgings, we wished them good-night, firmly believing that they were intrigued by women of fashion.”

Thus, for the pleasure of mystifying three green students, Rougette threw away in one night a sum sufficient to have supported her for six months.

A few days after, Rougette, deserted by a wealthy lover, reduced to despair, and weak from long fasting, threw herself from the Pont Neuf into the river. She was hauled out by the heels by some boatmen, her only exclamation being, as she came to, that they had scraped her face against the edge of their boat. Another of her class looked curiously on from the quay, audibly moralizing after this fashion: “And there are some women foolish enough to drown themselves for a man! Pshaw! a man—a thing so rare!”

Rougette was restored only to consciousness of her utter destitution and misery. She was ill besides. One of her supper companions by chance learned of her distress, and, with his last five francs, supplied her with a good dinner, which she needed more than medicine. He was not alone in his charity, as I will relate.

Meeting one of his companions, they strolled into the shop of a barber, who, besides his legitimate business, advanced

money on articles pawned, chiefly by the necessities of students and grisettes. Armand, who had been the first to succor Rougette, had dropped in to pledge his cloak to pay for his own dinner. His friend, hearing of the condition of Rougette, audibly vented his indignation against her heartless companions, with whom she had so lately sung and danced, for thus inhumanly deserting her. The barber, who had been attentively listening, here broke in: "Not so fast, my friend. Step here. You are too severe. I know Mademoiselle Nanette to be a most excellent person." "Yes," replied the censor, "when it is a matter of drinking and smoking." "Possibly," replied the barber; "I do not deny it: young persons must laugh, sing, and smoke, but, for all that, they may have a heart too. Do you see this dress?" said he, holding up a thread-worn, rusty black silk robe. They knew it at once to be Nanette's. "Yes, this is her *only* robe, and she has borrowed of me four francs on it, that she may succor Rougette. I have had it often. It is dear at that price, but Nanette never fails to redeem it."

Armand's friend felt conscience-smitten. To make amends, he redeemed the robe, and took it under his arm, and proposed that they should call upon Nanette. We shall find her in, doubtless, for this is her only dress, the sole relic of a better position, when her wardrobe was as extensive as her credit.

They arrived at her house and inquired for her. "Mademoiselle," replied the porter, "has gone to mass." "To church!" exclaimed Armand: "it is impossible. Let us enter; we are old friends." "I assure you it is true," replied the porter; "she has been gone these three quarters of an hour. She goes every morning to the church of St. Sulpice for her devotions. Look! there she is returning. You can see for yourselves."

True enough, there was Nanette returning from the church. Armand hurried to her, impatient to penetrate the mysteries of her toilet. She had on for a robe a petticoat of dark blue calico, half hidden under a window-curtain of green serge, disposed as a shawl; her head was prettily hid in her white bonnet, and her little feet covered with buskins. She had arranged her curtain with so much art that it seemed like an old shawl with the fringe hidden, and, even in this guise, she proved conclusively that a pretty woman is always pretty.

Alternating thus between the extremes of poverty and revelry, devotional without acquiring true wisdom, charitable in their destitution, and reckless in their prosperity; attachable but fickle, susceptible of the best sentiments of the heart, yet priding themselves on their levity, these creatures, like summer swallows, skim along the surface of humanity, occasionally tasting its joys, more frequently its miseries, but to terminate their checkered existence in a garret, with a pot of flowers on one side, a crucifix on the other, and straw beneath them, correct emblems of their inconsistent lives. Do they ever reflect, or is there a demon attached to them that hurries them on from one folly to another? Would the working girls of America, delivered up to their own guidance, without counsel, support, or a *home* to shelter them, be superior to their sisters of Paris? Would they be their equals in industry, neatness, charity, and cheerfulness? We hope and believe so, without their habitual lightness and prodigality, which savors more of nautical than feminine tastes. I wish I could add that the illness of Rougette had brought her reformation. But with convalescence beauty came back, and also the baron. Her resources were, for the moment, independent of the needle, and the next I heard of Nanette and Rougette was that they

were seen, choking with laughter, over a supper fit for a prince, in a private cabinet at the Maison Dorée.



NANETTE.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRISONS AND PRISONERS OF PARIS.

No one fails to visit the palaces of France. The pyramids of Egypt are not more identified with the history of the world than are the Louvre, Versailles, Tuileries, Fontainebleau, and St. Cloud. Each has played an important part in the annals of this empire, and they now embody its long series of triumphs of art and civilization.

To comprehend its history, it is necessary to explore its palaces. The associations of long and troublesome centuries cluster densely about them. To enter their halls is to lose sight of the present in the resurrection of the past. It is like retracing the track of time step by step; recalling generation after generation of kings, courtiers, and subjects, until we see once more the legions of Gaul forcing the imperial sway upon the gifted but apostate Julian.

But were we, as is usual, to confine our researches only to the palaces, we should obtain but an imperfect view of the glory and shame of France. To complete the picture, it is requisite to visit its prisons. They have played an equally interesting rôle in its annals; and rich as the palaces undoubtedly are in all that makes history attractive and instructive, the prisons are no less rife in warnings and example. Indeed, they are inseparably connected; for, as times were, no palace could exist without its prison, and there have been but few of the builders of the former that have not, at some interval or other of their career, tasted themselves of the bitterness of the

chains and confinement they prepared for others. Louis XVI., as if imbued with the presentiment that he one day would become the most wretched of prisoners, was the first monarch who deigned seriously to interest himself in the improvement of the prisons. At that time Paris alone contained thirty-two prisons of state. Its historians have represented it as being a nest of jails—a truth unfortunately but too evident, arising from the despotic nature of its feudal institutions, with their numerous civil and religious communities, each possessing distinct jurisdictions, and rights of high and low justice, with edifices destined to receive into their gloomy cells alike the innocent and guilty, so that aristocratic interest or priestly intolerance justified their captivity.

The excesses of the Revolution of 1789 have well-nigh obliterated the remembrance of its benefits. Humanity, however, is indebted to it for many reforms and concessions to natural right and justice. The *right to labor* was formerly a manorial right, granted by the king to those who *purchased* it. A decree of 1791, for the first time since France was a kingdom, restored to Frenchmen the privileges of the primeval curse, and they now all possess the general right to wring the sweat from their brows, though each species of labor is still girt about with a network of restrictions.

I know not how others may feel, but as for myself, in visiting the nucleus of a nation's civilization, I am not content with noting only its external glitter. Palaces, parks, galleries, and all the outer show of luxury and refinement, form a pleasing exhibition, but, if the view extend no farther, a delusive picture of the actual condition of the people. We study history to ascertain the true progress of man, and our hopes of the future are modified by the lessons of the past. It is not enough that we see history only in the garb of rank, or splendor of its palaces. We must equally seek it under the humble raiment

of the laborer in his hut or home, and in the prisons, which, from being mere citadels of private revenge, have at last become places of detention of criminals of every rank.

The prisons of Paris are now reduced to eight, under humane and enlightened supervision. These, with the military jails, are the sole survivors of the numerous array of prisons that were at once the disgrace of Paris and the scourge of humanity. To walk its streets with history in hand is to stumble momentarily over rings of iron, chains, instruments of torture, and tumulary stones, the cruel *débris* of cells and prisons. All who ruled—whether kings, lords, bishops, provosts, or corporations; even the holy church, bishops and monks—all who in any way had, by fraud, violence, or even talent, raised themselves above the low standard of humanity, built dungeons, and stored them with instruments of torture, ostensibly to repress crime, but in reality to conserve power or inflict revenge.

The predecessor of the present chateau of the Louvre was a political dungeon. Its tower was called by Louis XI. “Le plus beau fleuron de la couronne de France;” Le Cloître Nôtre Dame of the Church of Saint Germain l’Auxerrois has succeeded to the prisons of the “Bishop” and “Officialité.” The Place du Châtelet echoed often to the groans and complaints of the prisoners of the provosts of Paris and of the merchants; while there is scarcely a religious edifice raised upon the ruins of a monastery that has not its foundations in an ecclesiastical dungeon. Saint Martin des Champs was a prison; the Sainte Chapelle a prison—Sainte Geneviève a prison—Saint Germain des Près a prison—Saint Benoît a prison—The Temple a prison—Saint Gervais a prison—Saint Méry a prison; indeed, wander where you will in old Paris, and your footsteps are upon the remains of civil or religious tyranny, the catacombs of sectarian or political hate, but now exhibiting only temples

of the Prince of Peace. The *prison* has disappeared—the *church* remains. Humanity has made such an advance that we can now scarcely credit the fact that, in the fourteenth century, every convent and monastery had a subterranean stone cell, ironically called “*vade in pace*,” into which the victim was let down, never to reappear alive. Sometimes they were immediately starved to death, but generally they were supplied with coarse food by means of a basket and rope. An abbé of Tulle was accustomed to mutilate his prisoners. He cut off the left hand of a man who had appealed to the Parliament against him for having cut off his right hand. Such was the justice and humanity of the Church of that age.

Vincennes, from a palace, was converted by Louis XI. into a prison of state, and has continued ever since to retain its mongrel character of fortress and dungeon. It is the legitimate successor of the Bastille, and far more formidable as a means of offense to the citizens of Paris than ever was that fortification, yet, under the superior moral power of modern civilization, reduced to an innocent dépôt of munitions of war. In its “donjon” Charles IX. expired in torments of conscience far more terrible than those of the rack. Gladly would he have exchanged his downy bed for the hole in the stone wall, in the “Salle de la Question,” with the heavy iron chains that confined the limbs of the prisoner while he was subjected to the agonies of the “Question,” could he by so doing have expiated by sufferings of body the sins of his soul. But no: the night of St. Barthélémi was vividly before him. He wept, he shrieked, he tore himself, he groaned and sweated in his agony, but no relief came. He knelt humbly at the feet of the queen-mother, the partner and stimulator of his crimes. He asked pardon of the King of Navarre, and with clasped hands exclaimed, “Oh, my nurse! my nurse! how much blood! how many murders! Ah! I have followed bad counsel. O my

God, pardon me—forgive—grant me mercy, if it please Thee ! Oh, nurse, help—draw me from this. I do not know where I am, I am so agitated, so confused : what will become of all this ? What shall I do ? I am lost—I know it well. Oh, nurse, nurse, I strangle—I strangle !” It was the blood of Coligny and forty thousand of his murdered subjects that suffocated him.

His ancestor, Louis XI., the friend of the bourgeoisie, but the tyrant of the nobles, took a peculiar pleasure in torturing his victims of rank. He shut them up in iron cages, and came



LOUIS XI. VISITING HIS PRISONERS AT VINCENNES.

often to interrogate, accuse, or insult them. But, with all his ingenuity of cruelty, he never arrived at that refinement of inhumanity which, in the eighteenth century, doomed the pris-

oner of state, who had become dangerous by his courage, patience, or resignation, to the treatment of a maniac. Such were conducted to the hospitals, thrown into close cells, clad in strait-jackets, or the "*camisole de force*," bled, and subjected to the regimen of the insane, until their minds were extinguished in raging despair or pitiful imbecility.

The chapel windows of Vincennes contain a full-length portrait of Diana of Poitiers, the beautiful mistress of Henry II., painted by his order, entirely *naked*, amid a crowd of celestial beings. The royal ciphers are interlaced with her silver crescent. It is called a good likeness, and is readily known by the blue ribbons with which her hair is bound.

Sainte Pelagie still exists as a prison, the most ancient of Paris, and, singularly enough, retains upon its front the same appellation by which it was formerly known as an asylum for pious women—the spouses of Christ. It was here that Madame Roland expiated her vain theories of political liberty, that led both herself and Marie Antoinette to the scaffold. Here Madame du Barri shriekingly resisted her executioners, having incessantly besought Heaven, during her imprisonment of two months, to prolong a life still covetous of the pleasures of the world. Within its walls the Empress Josephine received her first lesson in the vicissitudes of fortune, sustained by the prediction that promised her a throne, consoling her companions in misfortune with the same grace that won for her in power the homage of all hearts. Later it became a prison for debtors. An American of the name of Swan has attached a souvenir to its dreary wall worthy of perpetual remembrance. He was a colonel in the Revolutionary army, the friend and compatriot of Washington, and had served with La Fayette in our war of Independence. Frequently did the latter bow his white hairs beneath the wicket of the jail as he passed through to visit his old brother in arms. But it was in vain that he or

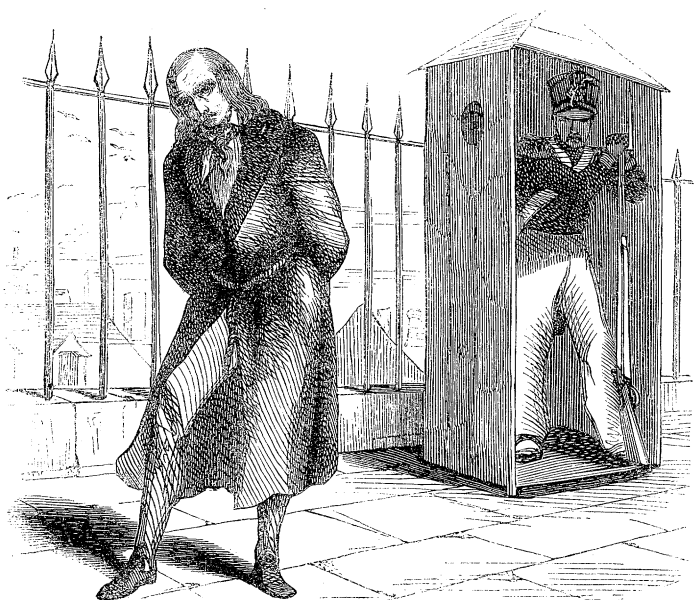


MADAME DU BARRI LED TO EXECUTION.

rich friends sought to prevail upon him to escape from this retreat. He had had a long lawsuit with a Frenchman, and, having lost his cause, preferred to give his body as a hostage to paying a sum which he believed not to be justly due. He was arrested, and remained twenty years in confinement, lodging in a little cell, modestly furnished, upon the second floor.

He was a fine-looking old gentleman, said to resemble in his countenance Benjamin Franklin. The prisoners treated him with great respect, yielding him as much space as possible for air and exercise, clearing a path for him, and even putting aside their little furnaces, upon which they cooked their meals, at his approach, for fear that the smell of charcoal should be unpleasant to him.

He had won their love by his considerate and uniform benevolence. Not a day passed without some kind act on his part, often mysterious and unknown in its source to the recipient. Frequently a poor debtor knocked at his door for bread, and, in addition, obtained his liberty. Colonel Swan had



COLONEL SWAN AT THE SAINTE PELAGIE.

means, but he applied them to the release of others and not of himself. Once a fellow-prisoner, the father of a numerous family, imprisoned for a debt of a few hundred francs, applied to be received into his service at six francs a month. Colonel Swan had lost his servant, and inquired into the history of the new candidate. Upon learning it, he replied, "I consent;" and, opening his trunk, counted out a pile of crowns, saying, "Here are your wages for five years in advance; should your work prevent you from coming to see me, you can send your wife." Such deeds were often renewed.

One creditor only retained the venerable captive, hoping each year to see his resolution give way, and each year calling upon him with a proposal for an accommodation. The director of the prison, the friends of Colonel Swan, even the jailers, urged him to accept the proposed terms, and be restored to his country and family. Politely saluting his creditor, he would turn toward the jailer, and simply say, "My friend, return me to my chamber." Toward the end of the year 1829, his physician had obtained for him the privilege of a daily promenade in one of the galleries of the prison, where he could breathe a purer atmosphere than that to which he had long been subjected. At first he was grateful for the favor, but soon said to the doctor, "The inspiring air of liberty will kill my body, so long accustomed to the heavy atmosphere of the prison."

The revolution of July, 1830, threw open his prison doors in the very last hour of his twentieth year of captivity. After the triumph of the people, he desired to embrace once more his old friend La Fayette. He had that satisfaction, upon the steps of the Hotel de Ville. The next morning he was dead.

Clichy has succeeded Sainte Pelagie as a debtors' prison. To the rich debtor it has but few terrors, though the law of France places his personal freedom at the disposition of his

creditors. Some may, like Colonel Swan, refuse to pay from principle, others from whim or obstinacy. Of the latter was a noble Persian, Nadir Mirza Shah. Rich, young, and dissi-



NADIR MIRZA SHAH IN THE DEBTORS' PRISON.

pated, he plunged into every species of folly, and finally flogged his coachman, who summoned him before the civil tribunal, which sentenced him to three months' imprisonment and damages. Refusing to pay, he was confined in the debtors'

jail, where he passed some time carousing with his friends and voluntary companions in captivity, and surrounding himself with Oriental luxury. Mattresses served for tables and divans; they sat *à la Turque*, ate with their fingers, and, forgetting the Koran, drank wine like Christians. Nadir Mirza Shah was as intractable in requiring of his companions the rigid observance of Persian etiquette as he was in refusing to pay the damages due the unlucky coachman, who, in his eyes, was simply a dog of an infidel.

Clichy possesses a rich fund of individual eccentricities and curious anecdotes, such as only Parisian life can develop. In 1838, a tailor of the Rue de Helder caused the Count de B——, a noble Dalmatian, to be confined for a debt of six thousand francs. He remained five years in prison, passing the entire time in his chamber. Not once did he descend into the garden, nor did he ever walk in the corridors. Whenever spoken to, he replied with great courtesy, but he never entered the cells of his companions, or invited them to visit him. During the five years of his imprisonment he was not once seen to open a book, to read a newspaper, or to do any work whatever. He passed entire days standing before his window, in full dress, with his coat buttoned to his throat. His linen had given out, but his boots were scrupulously polished each morning by a fellow-prisoner. He never bathed, but his handsome black beard was always carefully combed and perfumed as if he was going to a ball. Two letters only reached him, and two visitors only called during these five years.

The first time, about two years after his incarceration, his creditor appeared at the wicket, and the following conversation ensued :

“ Monsieur Count, you have done me the honor to send for me ; what can I do for you ? ”

"Sir, I have exhausted my personal resources ; a gentleman like myself can not live on the prison allowance of sixteen sous per day. Since you believe me good for six thousand francs, I will pay you a greater sum when I have sold my estates in Dalmatia."

"That appears just, Monsieur Count : how much do you desire ?"

"I wish fifty francs a month."

"You shall have them. I am too happy to be useful to you. Is that all you desire ?"

"Absolutely all ; and I am very grateful to you."

"Do not speak of that, I beg of you ; I am your servant, my dear Monsieur Count."

During three years the fifty francs a month were regularly supplied by the tailor.

In 1843 the tailor reappeared, followed by two porters carrying a heavy trunk.

"Monsieur Count," said he, "I have received the letter with which you honored me, and I accept your propositions. I place you at liberty, and I have brought you effects suitable to your rank. You will find, also, a watch, chain, pins, rings, eyeglass—every thing of the best description. Here is a purse of five hundred francs in gold for the fifteen days that you desire to pass in Paris for relaxation. These five hundred francs are for your petty expenses, for I have taken the liberty to pay in advance for an apartment and domestic at your orders in the Hôtel des Princes. My notary is coming, and we will arrange the security for all my advances, now amounting to eighteen thousand francs, to which it will be necessary to add three thousand francs that I shall give my clerk, who, at the expiration of the fortnight, will post to Dalmatia with you, paying your joint expenses, and bringing me back my money."

The contract was duly signed, and the release given. The

Count faithfully amused himself during his carnival of fifteen days, according to his stipulation. On the sixteenth he left with the clerk, who never had made a more agreeable journey; but on his return he was obliged to announce to the munificent tailor that, owing to previous incumbrances on the estates of the Count, it was extremely doubtful whether he would ever receive a hundred crowns for his twenty-one thousand francs.

Imprisonment for debt, like most cruel remedies for social misfortunes, seldom attains the desired end. An honest man will pay if he can; a dishonest one can evade justice even within prison walls; and for the unfortunate it becomes a double evil. It was powerless to open Colonel Swan's purse, because its strings were tied by principle. It was equally futile in contact with the obstinacy of Nadir Mirza Shah, who preferred his prejudices to his freedom, and chose rather to carouse in the cell of a jail than to wound his pride by paying a fine which would have transferred his festivity to a palace. The tailor shut up the count in close confinement for five years for six thousand francs, and at the end of the time was swindled by him out of twenty-one thousand. These cases are characteristic of a large class. But the pains and penalties of incarceration fall heaviest on the poor debtors, whom misfortune has pursued with a heavy hand until they are left powerless for exertion in the grasp of avarice, or withered in heart and mind by the exactions of inflexible severity. The race of Shylocks will never expire except with the razing of dungeons for debtors. The thoroughly vicious are seldom caught. To the unfortunate it becomes a living tomb. Respectability is blighted, enterprise chained, the mind paralyzed, and the poor debtor is reduced to a chrysalis state. He is fortunate if his better qualities and intelligence are not extinguished in the heavy atmosphere of his cell, or transformed into mischievous tendencies or reckless desires, while his destitute family are

left a prey to vice or want. Clichy, from its first days, has been stained with the blood of suicides, and haunted with the ravings of maniacs. One poor workman, who had seen sold for a debt of three hundred francs his humble furniture, and even the clothes of himself and his wife and infants, was here confined, after being divested of every thing but his naked arms wherewith he could gain a subsistence for his family. By what process these were to supply them with food, and to pay his debt when confined between the stone walls of a cell, none but a bowelless creditor could conceive. Despair overcame his reason. He was found the next morning covered with gore, and the name of his creditor traced with a bloody hand on the walls of his cell.

Confinement for debt is bad enough of itself, but in France it is aggravated by unnecessary restrictions and a penurious aliment. The law allows eighteen cents a day for the debtor's subsistence, or thirty francs a month, which he is obliged to divide daily as follows:

	<i>Cents.</i>
Hire of furniture	5
The right to warm his feet at a common fire	1
Barber.	1
Washing.	2
Light.	1
Food	8
	18

Such are the resources of the *poor* debtors. What proportion of these can be withdrawn for families it would puzzle the wants of even a Liliputian to decide. The number annually confined in Clichy is 580 to 600, of whom about one fourth are single persons, and over two thirds have children. Wives are separated from husbands by being confined in a separate building. They are allowed no intercourse, except in a common parlor, in the presence of a guardian.

Another anomalous feature of this system is, that the director of the prison becomes pecuniarily responsible in case of the escape of one of his prisoners. This is rarely attempted, as the chances of final escape are very limited in a city like Paris. Mr. G., one of the directors, said to the Prefect of the Police, who had reminded him of his pecuniary responsibility, "I am able to respond for a few thousand francs, and I should satisfy the obligation if the debt was small; but if, notwithstanding my vigilance, a debtor of a hundred thousand francs should escape, I should open immediately the gates to all others. It is as well to be responsible for several millions as for a hundred thousand francs, if one can no more pay the lesser sum than the greater."

It is a significant fact in the annals of imprisonment for debt in the Department of the Seine, that of 2566 debtors discharged during six years, 307 only owe their enlargement to the payment of their debts.

The souvenirs of the prisons of Paris include the history of France. It were well if, with the disappearance of the walls of La Force, all its deplorable associations could have been as readily erased. Not one stone of the Bastille has been left upon another. A column of liberty announces the site of that fortress of tyranny; yet no existing prison of stone and mortar, with its iron gates and gloomy cells, in all their dreadful reality, stands half so conspicuous to the eye as that which is palpable to the imagination. It will exist as the emblem of tyranny through all ages, and yet its history is not worse than that of numerous others. Indeed, democracy owes it some gratitude as the instrument by which aristocracy, in accomplishing its selfish designs, often avenged upon kindred blood the wrongs of the people.

The dungeons of the Abbaye were the handiwork of monks. The architect, Gornard, in 1635, completed the abbey, but re-

fused to build the prison. He carried his opposition so far as to prevent any laborers from engaging in the work. "My brothers," cried the superior, "it is necessary to finish what the obstinacy of the architect refuses to achieve. Let us put our own hands to the work, build the jail, and complete our *sacred* edifice." The brothers obeyed.



THE MONKS BUILDING THE ABBAYE PRISON.

In those days every spiritual and temporal power had the privilege of placing in the pillory those declared culpable by its special laws. There was not a corporation but had its dis-

tinct code, judges, executioners, racks, and prisons. The old historian, Sauval, has left a list of twenty-four distinct jurisdictions which possessed the right to condemn men to the gallows, and the city of Paris to-day divided into numerous municipal divisions, had then for the limits of its subdivisions as many gibbets. The discipline of the Holy Catholic Church of that century required a dungeon, or a "*vade in pace*," no less than its faith the emblem of the cross. If they ever abused their power by the persecution of the innocent, fearfully did they expiate their want of charity in the slaughter of their brethren on this very spot, on the 2d of September, 1792. Externally and internally, it is the most gloomy of all the prisons of Paris. It contains several subterranean dungeons, the same, perhaps, on which the old monks worked.

It was here that Mademoiselle de Sombreuil won from the murderers of September the life of her father, at the price of drinking a glass of warm blood fresh from their still writhing victims.

The most touching souvenir of this prison is that of the venerable Cazotte, who was also saved by his daughter under circumstances more grateful to humanity on either side. The evening before, she had obtained leave to remain with him, and had, by her beauty and eloquence, interested several of his guards in his fate. Condemned, at the expiration of thirty hours of unremitting slaughter, he stepped forth to meet his fate. As he appeared in the midst of his assassins, his daughter, pale and disheveled, threw her arms about him, exclaiming, "You shall not reach my father except through my heart!" A cry of pardon was heard, and repeated by a hundred voices. The murderers allowed her to lead away her father, and then coolly turned to recommence their work of slaughter upon less fortunate prisoners.

A little later, Cazotte, separated from his daughter, became



MADemoisELLE DE SOMBREUIL SAVING HER FATHER.

the victim of the Revolution, whose excesses he had so faithfully predicted. The sketch by La Harpe of the dinner-scene, in which his prophecy is made to appear, is one of the most remarkable and graphic scenes in French literature.

"It seems to me but yesterday," says La Harpe, "and, notwithstanding, it was the commencement of 1788. We were at dinner at one of our fellow-members of the Academy, a great lord and wit. The company was numerous, and of every class—courtiers, lawyers, men of letters, academicians, &c. The fare was rich, according to custom. At the dessert, the

P

wines of Malvoisie and Constance added to the gayety of the company that sort of freedom in which one does not always guard a perfectly correct tone, for it was then allowable to do or say any thing that would call forth a laugh. Chamfort had read to us his impious and libertine tales, and the grand ladies had listened without even having recourse to a fan. Then there arose a deluge of pleasantries and jokes upon religion: one cited a tirade of the Pucelle; another recalled the philosophic verses of Diderot. The conversation became more serious. They spoke with admiration of the revolution which Voltaire had made, and all agreed that it was his first title to glory. 'He has given a book to his century which is read as well in the ante-chamber as the salon.' One of the company related to us, choking with laughter, that his barber had said to him, as he was powdering him, 'Do you see, sir, although I am but a miserable hair-dresser, I have no more religion than any one else?' They all concluded that the Revolution would not be slow to perfect its work; that it was absolutely necessary that superstition and fanaticism should yield to philosophy, and that all they had to do was to calculate the epoch when they would see the *reign of reason*.

"One only of the company had not taken part in the levity of the conversation, and had even let drop quietly some pleasant-ries upon our fine enthusiasm. It was Cazotte, an amiable and original man, but, unhappily, infatuated with reveries of the future. He took up the conversation in a serious tone. 'Messieurs,' said he, 'be content; you will all see *this grand and sublime revolution that you desire so much!* You know that I am somewhat of a prophet: I repeat it to you, you will all see it!'

"Here the company shouted; they joked Cazotte; they teased him; they forced him to foretell of each what he knew in this coming revolution. Condorcet was the first that provoked him; he received this mortal answer:

“‘Ah! we will see,’ said Condorcet, with his saturnine, mocking air; ‘a philosopher is not sorry to encounter a prophet.’ ‘You, Monsieur de Condorcet,’ replied Cazotte, ‘you will expire extended upon the pavement of a cell; you will die by poison which you will have taken to cheat the executioner—the poison which the *happiness* of that time will force you always to carry about you.’”

They were somewhat astonished at this species of pleasantry, spoken in so serious a tone, but soon began to reassure themselves, knowing that the good man Cazotte was subject to dreams. This time it was Chamfort that returned to the charge with a laugh of sarcasm. He received an answer in his turn.

“You, Monsieur Chamfort, you will cut your veins with twenty-two strokes of the razor, and, notwithstanding, you will not die until some months after.”

Then it was the turn of Vicq d’Azir, M. de Nicolai, De Bailly, De Malesherbes, De Roucher, all of whom were present. Each who touched Cazotte received a shock in return, and each shock was a thunder-stroke that killed him. The word scaffold was the perpetual refrain.

“Oh! it’s a wager,” cried they on all sides; “he has sworn to exterminate us all.” “No, it is not I that have sworn it.” “But shall we then be subjected by the Turks or Tartars?” “Not at all; I have already told you. You will then be governed by the only *philosophy*, by the only *reason*.”

The turn of La Harpe arrived, although he had purposely kept himself somewhat apart.

“Plenty of miracles,” said he, at length, “and you put nothing down to me.” “You will see there” (replied Cazotte to him) “a miracle not the least extraordinary: you will then become a *Christian*.”

At this word Christian, in such an assembly of scoffers, one

can imagine the exclamations of laughter, mockery, and derision.

“Ah!” replied Chamfort, “I am reassured: if we are not to perish until La Harpe becomes a Christian, we shall be immortal.”

Then came the turn of the ladies. The Duchess of Grammont took up the conversation.

“As for that,” said she, “we are very happy, we women, to pass for nothing in the revolutions. When I say nothing, it is not that we do not mix a little in them; but it is understood that they do not take notice of us and our sex.” “Your sex, Madame” (it was Cazotte who spoke), “will be no defense this time. It will be in vain that you do not mingle in them; you will be treated as men, without any distinction whatever.”

One can readily conceive the finale of this dialogue. Here it became more and more dramatic and terrible. Cazotte arrived by steps to cause greater ladies than duchesses to feel that they would go to the scaffold—princesses of the blood, and even more exalted rank than the princesses themselves. This passed being a play. All pleasantry ceased.

“You will see”—another essay of irony by the Duchess of Grammont—“that he will not leave me even a confessor.” “No, Madame, you will not have one—neither you nor any person. The last victim who, by an act of grace, will have one, will be—”

He stopped a moment. “Indeed! who then is the happy mortal that will enjoy this prerogative?” Cazotte slowly replied, “It is the last that will remain to him, and this person will be the *King of France*.”

The master of the house arose brusquely, and every one with him, but not before Cazotte had predicted his own death by the executioner.

What a subject for a painter! The assemblage of these

master-wits of France at the festive board, unconsciously scoffing at the fate then ripe to swallow them in its inexorable jaws; a modern Belshazzar-feast, mocking at the Daniel that foretold the coming tempest, and awakening only from their dream of philosophy and reign of reason to find themselves in prison or on a scaffold. The prophecy was true. La Harpe has, in his narrative, given it strength and effect; but, as he justly remarks, their several destinies were more marvelous than the prophecy. La Harpe became a Christian, and survived the Reign of Terror and the Dynasty of Reason.

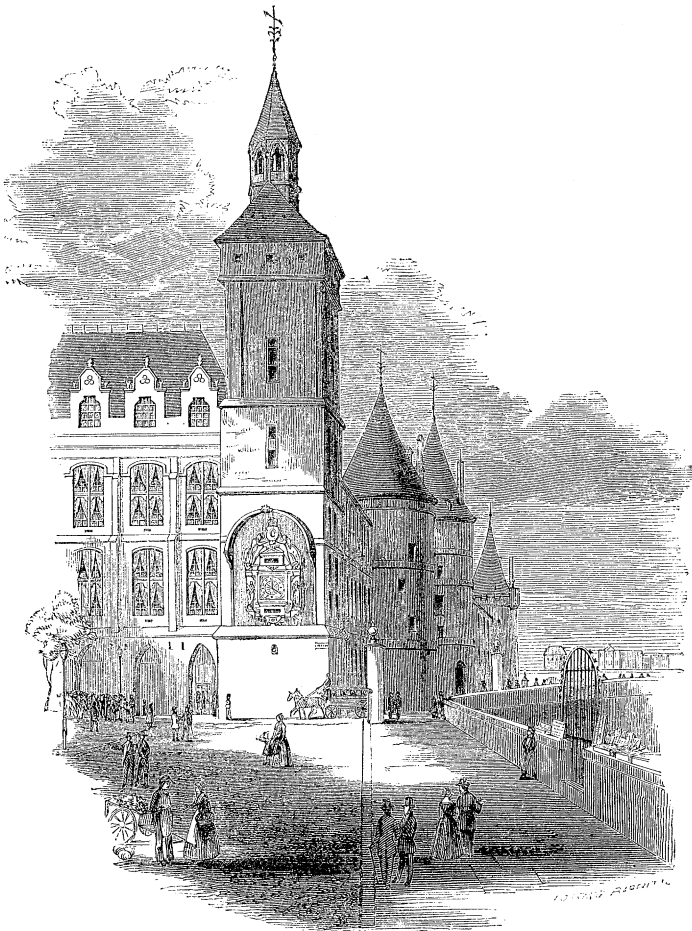
Of all the prisons of Paris, the Conciergerie is the most interesting, from its antiquity, associations, and mixed style of architecture, uniting, as it were, the horrors of the dungeons of the Middle Ages with the more humane system of confinement of the present century. It exhibits in its mongrel outline the progressive ameliorations of humanity toward criminals and offenders, forming, as it were, a connecting link between feudal barbarity and modern civilization. As an historical monument, it is unsurpassed in interest by any other of this capital. Situated in the heart of old Paris, upon the Ile de la Cité, separated from the Seine by the Quai de l'Horloge, it is one of a cluster of edifices pregnant with souvenirs of sufficient importance in the annals of France for each to supply a volume. These buildings are the "Sainte Chapelle," the Préfecture de Police, and the Palais de Justice, formerly the residence of the French monarchs. The Conciergerie, which derives its name from *concierger*, or keeper, was anciently the prison of the palace. It is now used chiefly as a place of detention for persons during their trial. The recent alterations have greatly diminished the gloomy and forbidding effect of its exterior, but sufficient of its old character remains to perpetuate the associations connected with its former uses, and to preserve for it its interest as a relic of feudalism. The

names of the two turrets flanking the gateway, Tour de César and Tour Boubec, smack of antiquity. Compared with Cæsar, however, its age is quite juvenile, being under nine hundred years. At the east corner there is a tall square tower, containing a remarkable clock, the first seen in Paris, the movements of which were made in 1370 by Henry de Vic, a German. It has been recently restored, and is one of the most curious bijoux of sculpture which have been bequeathed to us by the revival of the arts.

In this same tower hung the bell, known as the "toecin du Palais," which repeated the signal for the massacre of St. Barthelémi, given from the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. The low grated gateway through which passed those condemned to die upon the Place de Grève still exists. The Bridge of Sighs has not been witness to more anguish of mind and physical torture than this same ominous dungeon door. The aspect of this portion of this ancient prison—its dark corridors, with their low, ponderous vaulted roofs, and arched staircases—is peculiarly sinister, suggesting the mysterious horrors of a political inquisition, unexcelled in this respect by the entrances to the subterranean dungeons of the Doges of Venice.

The *people* of Paris, through all time, will bear the reproach of the massacres of September, 1792, the horrors of which are indelibly affixed to this jail. But impartial justice will recall the fact that, five centuries previous, a Duke of Burgundy perpetrated within its walls a still more fearful slaughter of his unarmed and unresisting countrymen, destroying by smoke and fire those that he could not reach by the sword.

There is a retributive justice to be traced in the history of every institution resulting from the inhumanity of man to his fellow-man that carries with it a warning as legible as the "*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*" on the palace walls of Babylon.



THE CONCIERGERIE.

The Conciergerie was for centuries the stronghold and prison of feudalism, and the repository of its *criminal* justice. It was

stored with its diabolical inventions to rack human nerves and to excruciate human flesh, agonizing the body so that the soul should disown truth, or that shrinking humanity should be forced to confess crimes which otherwise would have slumbered unrevealed until the day when all secrets will be disclosed. It faithfully served its aristocratic builders; but when Louis XI., and, later, the Cardinal Richelieu, succeeded in erecting a kingdom of France upon the ruins of feudal power, the Conciergerie received into its cells its late lords, and avenged in their fall the blood that they had so often spilled.

A description of the various instruments of torture which were employed even as late as the latter part of the reign of Louis XVI., scarcely sixty years since, by the judiciary of France, would now be received with incredulity. Yet this species of human butchery is so recent, and was so long sanctioned by the highest civil and religious authorities, that one may readily be pardoned for a shudder at its recollection, not without a fear that human nature might, in one of its avenging paroxysms, recall so terrible an auxiliary of hate.

By a singular freak of time, the oldest legible entry in the archives of the Conciergerie is that of the incarceration of the regicide Ravaillac, dated 16th May, 1610. His sentence, pronounced by Parliament on the 27th of May, was as follows: "To be conducted to the Place de Grève, and there, upon a scaffold, to have his breasts, arms, thighs, and calves of his legs lacerated with red-hot pincers, his right hand, which had held the knife with which he committed the said 'parricide,' to be burned off in a fire of sulphur, and into all his wounds to be thrown melted lead, boiling oil, burning pitch, and wax and sulphur mingled. This done, his body to be drawn and dismembered by four horses, and afterward consumed by fire, and his ashes thrown to the winds." Such were the tender mercies of the Parliament of France in 1610, repeated with aggra-

vated horrors, more than a century later, upon Damiens by the Bourbon "*Bien Aimé*." It is necessary to recall to mind the judicial barbarities perpetrated in the name of justice in this country, that we may rightly appreciate the services rendered humanity in their abolition by the philosophy that gave birth to the Revolution; in this instance the more conspicuous, when we reflect that religion had long lent to them additional terror by its perverted sanction. The iron collar of Ravail-lac, and the tower of Damiens, at present the warming-room of the prison, still serve to transmit to posterity the double recollection of their crimes and the appalling tortures to which they were subjected previous to their final execution. Their diabolical ingenuity has failed to stay a single attempt on "sacred majesty," as almost every ruler of France has since repeatedly borne witness; so that now the inheritors of the "divine right" content themselves by simply bestowing upon their assassins the sudden death which is the just penalty of their crime.

The Conciergerie has repeatedly borne witness to the lofty resolution and unshaken firmness of woman—the result, it must in sorrow be confessed, as often of hardened guilt as of conscious innocence. It is strange that virtue and vice, in the extremity of death, should so nearly resemble each other. I am tempted to give a few examples, leaving to the reader his own inferences upon the strange problem of human nature.

In 1617, Eléonore Galigai, the wily and ambitious confidante of Marie de Médicis, fell a victim to stronger arts than her own. Corruption, treachery, prostitution of honors, treasure, and employments, were all practices too common with the accusing courtiers and great lords for them to venture to condemn her upon such grounds. Not one was to be found to cast the first stone of a just condemnation. The Parliament accused her of Judaism and sorcery. In the chamber of tor-

ture they asked her if she were really possessed. She replied that she had never been possessed except with the desire to do good. She was then asked if she had sorcery in her eyes. "The only sorcery," said she, laughing, "that I am guilty of, is the sorcery of wit and intelligence."

Certain books having been found at her hotel, they questioned her in regard to their character. "They serve to teach me that I know nothing." Next they sought to discover by what sacrilegious means she had acquired her influence over the queen. She replied that she had "subdued a weak soul by the strength of her own."



EXECUTION OF ELEONORE GALIGAI.

Such replies being little edifying to her successors in intrigue and chicanery, they destroyed the tongue they could not subdue by giving her head to the axe.

In the latter part of the seventeenth century, political hate, or private interest and revenge, had taken the more subtle and less conspicuous shape of impoisonment. The crime was aristocratic, and so were its victims. The person who affrighted Paris with the first pinch of the "*poudre de succession*" was a lady and a "Marquise." In 1680, the common talk of Paris and Versailles was of poisons and their effects. Deaths were frequent and mysterious, the causes so subtle as to elude detection. It was finally discovered that the vender of the poison was a woman known by the name of La Voisine. She had succeeded to the fatal secrets of the laboratory of Madame de Brinvilliers, the "Marquise," who four years before, after being subjected to torture, had expiated her crimes on the scaffold. It was now the turn of La Voisine. Unlike the Marquise, who was beautiful, spirituelle, and accomplished, she was gross, ugly, and brutal. The Marquise feared the torture, and confessed all, and perhaps more crimes than she had committed. La Voisine, on the contrary, scoffed at the instruments of torture, and mocked alike the judges and executioners. She seemed exalted above fear or suffering by the very enthusiasm of wickedness. No martyr to religion ever showed more firmness and indifference to all that is most appalling to human nerves. She even accused herself of impossible crimes in the excitement of her depraved pride, glorifying herself by the intensity of her abominable passions. She joked with the lieutenant of police; she laughed at her keepers; she drank with the soldiers that watched her; she spat in contempt upon the engines of torment; she parodied modesty by an indecent arrangement of her dress; she sang, for fear that they would pity her; she insulted the tribunal when in-

terrogated ; she blasphemed if they spoke of God ; she cursed when she feared that she should faint under the torture ; she did all that it was possible for human depravity to do, exhausting in its folly and crime the very dregs of sin.

When the officers entered the chamber of torture of the Conciergerie to read her sentence, she bowed herself as indecently as possible, almost touching the earth, and coolly said, "Gentlemen, I salute you," and then proceeded to interrupt the recital with songs, blasphemies, and insults.

"You are condemned," said the president, "for impieties, poisonings, artifices, misdeeds, thefts, and complots against the lives of persons, for sacrilege, and other crimes without number, such as homicide in fact and intention, as culpable of diabolical practices and treason—to make honorable amends at the door of Notre Dame—"

"A wonder!" cried La Voisine ; "we shall see the devil in the holy water—"

"And to be conducted to the Place de Grève to be burned, and your ashes thrown to the wind."

"Which will waft them to hell, I hope," exclaimed the incorrigible woman.

"You are also condemned to submit to renewed torture, to extract from you the name of accomplices not yet given."

"You have only to choose them among your great lords and noble ladies. Have they not prevented me by their folly from continuing my own profession of an accoucheur? They commenced by asking of me secrets of the future, and I have drawn their cards, and given them the most brilliant horoscopes ; they then demanded of me '*fioles de jeunesse*,' and I have sold them pure water under the guise of water of youth. They have asked of me some grains of that powder of succession which succeeded so well with Madame de Brinvilliers, and I have given them my strongest poisons. You now know all my accomplices."

"And, finally," continued the judge, "you are condemned to submit to the torture extraordinary."

"I shall answer the best I can, M^{onsieur} Judge. Bind me with my hands behind my back ; lash my legs with cords ; lay me down upon the wooden horse" (an instrument of torture) ; "torture me at your leisure : I will continue to laugh, to blaspheme, to sing, regretting all the while that you do not put a little wine in your water." (The species of torture was to cause the prisoner to swallow several quarts of water by means of a little stream trickling slowly into the mouth.) "Go on ! courage ! Judge and executioner, I am ready."

"First pot of water for the torture ordinary," said the judge, making a sign to the executioner.

"To your health !" replied La Voisine.

The "question" was begun by two large pints of cold water turned, drop by drop, into the mouth of the criminal. When the jug was emptied, they turned three spokes of the wooden horse, elongating the limbs until the tendons were ready to snap.

"You are right, my friends : one should grow at all ages. I always grumbled at being too small. I wish to be as large as my sister Brinvilliers."

"Second pot of the ordinary," ordered the judge.

"May God render it back to you," exclaimed the poisoner.

They emptied the second jug. The horse was stretched anew. The bones of the old woman cracked and snapped under the torture. Seven jugs of water were successively emptied down her throat, drop by drop—one continuous strangulation—a hundred deaths condensed into a few hours. Upon the advice of the physician, La Voisine was resuscitated. They placed her upon a mattress near the fire. If the gradual insensibility of the criminal had been protracted torture, the slow revival was a greater agony.

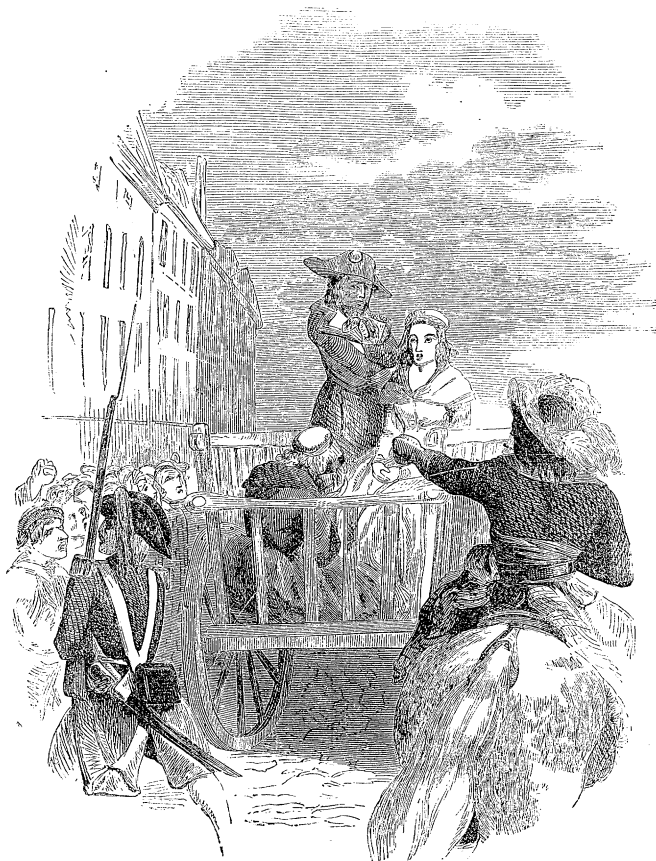
Returned to her cell at midnight, La Voisine sought daily to pass her time in riotous indulgences. She had swallowed fourteen pints of water; she demanded to drink fourteen bottles of wine.

It is to Madame de Sévigné that we are indebted for a narrative of her last moments. True to her fanaticism of wickedness, she feasted with her guards, sang drinking songs, and, mangled as she was in every limb, spared not herself from the most scandalous excesses of debauchery. It was in vain that they attempted to recall her to serious thoughts, and recommended that she should chant an *Ave* or a *Salve*; she chanted both in derision, and then slept. Neither force nor torture could wring from her the required confession; even when chained to the fatal pile, she swore constantly, and contrived five or six times to throw off from her the burning straw with which she was enveloped, but at last the fire prevailed; she was lost to sight, and her cinders borne aloft by the eddying current of air, where Madame de Sévigné, with a levity that does no credit to her heart, says they still are.

The life of Cartouche, the grand robber *par excellence*, suggests many a striking parallel with that of the "Grand Monarch." It would be a curious and instructive history, if my space permitted, to show the congeniality of principles and actions between Louis XIV. and the most dexterous and munificent of bandits. Versailles lodged the one, and the Conciergerie the other. Which was the greater criminal, when weighed in the balance of the King of kings, it is not for a fellow-sinner to decide. Each admirably acted his part in the estimation of the world. The evil done by the one perished with him; the vanity, lust, pride, and bigotry of the other still weighs upon the energies and industry of France. The king died peacefully in his bed, in the comfortable belief of passing from his temporal kingdom to a brighter inheritance above;

the robber perished on the wheel, amid the jeers of the populace and the curiosity of fine ladies. It is devoutly to be hoped that the breed of each is extinguished.

To visit the Conciergerie, and not recall the image of the most illustrious and innocent sufferer of all that have hallow-



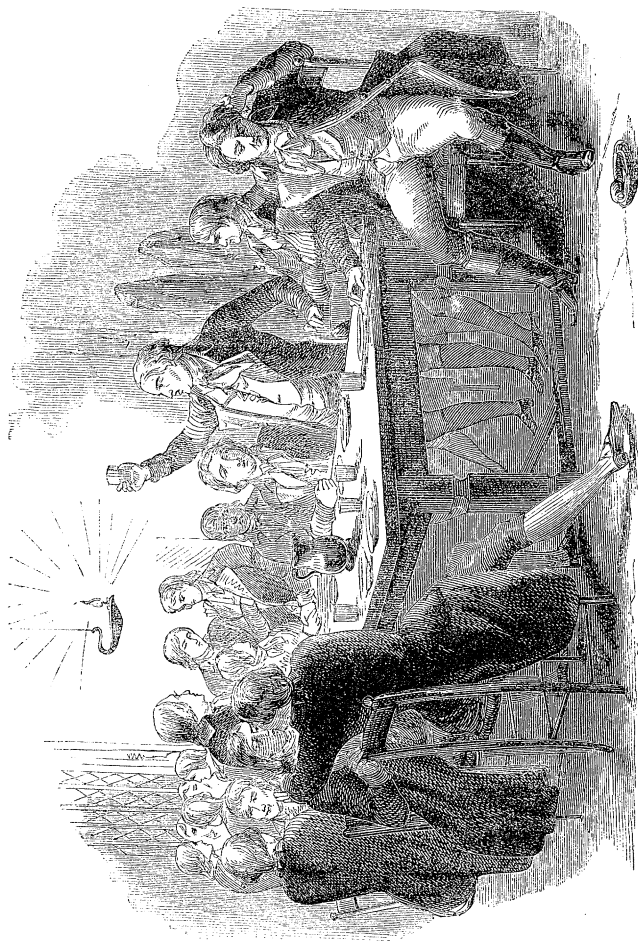
MARIE ANTOINETTE BORNE TO EXECUTION.

ed its walls by examples of piety and resignation, would be to refuse a tribute to those sentiments which most dignify human nature, and reconcile us to its mingled weakness and grandeur. The dungeon of Marie Antoinette is now an expiatory chapel, with nothing to recall its original condition except the souvenirs connected with the sufferings by which she so dearly expiated the frivolities and thoughtlessness of her early career. To add the bitterness of contrast, and the contact of vice with virtue, to her end, she was dragged to the scaffold in an open cart, in company with a prostitute guilty of having cried in a cabaret "*Vive la reine !*" The poor girl, still capable in her abasement of appreciating the intended insult to the Queen of France, knelt at her feet, and humbly said to her, as they drove to their joint death, "Madame, Madame, forgive me for dying with your majesty."

I believe there is but one species of natural or artificial violence to which mankind do not, in time, become, if not reconciled, at least reckless or indifferent. Famine, pestilence, war, and civil calamities in time cease to affright or warn. Human nature, with its versatility of powers for good or evil, soon reconciles itself, under one aspect or the other, to any inevitable condition, however terrible its first appearance. The exception is the earthquake. The first shock is the least fearful; every succeeding one increases trepidation, and destroys self-possession. The prisoners of the Conciergerie were almost daily decimated by the guillotine during the Reign of Terror, yet their daily *amusement* was to play at charades and the—*guillotine*. Both sexes and all ranks assembled in one of the halls. They formed a revolutionary tribunal, choosing accusers and judges, and parodying the gestures and voice of Fouquier Tinville and his coadjutors. Defenders were named; the accused were taken at hazard. The sentence of death followed close on the heels of the accusation.

They simulated the toilet of the condemned, preparing the neck for the knife by feigning to cut the hair and collar. The sentenced were attached to a chair reversed, to represent the guillotine. The knife was of wood, and, as it fell, the individual, male or female, thus sporting with their approaching fate, tumbled down as if actually struck by the iron blade. Often, while engaged in this *play*, they were interrupted by the terrible voice of the public crier calling over the "names of the brigands who to-day have gained the lottery of the holy guillotine."

Imperfect as are these souvenirs of this celebrated jail, I should be doing injustice to the most interesting of all were I to omit the last night of the Girondists, that antique festivity, the greatest triumph of philosophy ever witnessed by palace or prison walls. Those fierce, theoretical deputies, who had so recently sent to the scaffold the King and Queen of France, were now on their way thither. Christianity teaches men to live in peaceful humility, and to die with hopeful resignation. The last hour of a true believer is calmly joyous. Here was an opportunity for infidelity to assert its superiority in death, as it had claimed for itself the greatest good in life. Let us be just to even these deluded men. They had played a terrible rôle in the history of their country, and they resigned themselves to die with the same intrepidity with which they had staked their existence upon the success of their policy. They made it a death fête, each smiling as he awaited the dread message, and devoting his latest moments to those displays of intellectual rivalry which had so long united them in life. Mainvielle, Ducos, Gensonné, and Boyer Fonfrède abandoned themselves to gayety, wit, and revelry, repeating their own verses with friendly rivalry, stimulating their companions to every species of infidel folly. Viger sang amorous songs; Duprat related a tale; Gensonné repeated the Mar-



LAST NIGHT OF THE GIRONDISTS

seillaise ; while Vergniaud alternately electrified them with his eloquence, or discoursed philosophically of their past history and the unknown future upon which they were about to

enter. The discussion on poetry, literature, and general topics was animated and brilliant; on God, religion, the immortality of the soul, grave, eloquent, calm, and poetic. The walls of their prison echoed to a late hour in the morning to their patriotic cries, and were witness to their paternal embraces. The corpse of Valazé, the only one who, by a voluntary death, eluded the scaffold, remained in the cell with them.

The whole scene was certainly the greatest, wildest, and most dramatic ever born of courage and reason, yet throughout their enthusiasms there appears a chill of uncertainty and an intellectual coldness that appalls the conscience. We feel that, for the Girondists, it was a consistent sacrifice to their theories and lives; but for a Christian and patriot, a sad and unedifying spectacle. While history can not refuse her tribute of admiration to high qualities, even when misdirected, she is equally bound to record the errors and repeat the warnings to be derived from those who claim for themselves a space in her pages. The lives of the Girondists, as well as their deaths, were a confused drama of lofty aspirations, generous sentiments, and noble sacrifices, mingled with error, passion, and folly. Their character possesses all the cold brilliancy of fireworks, which excite our admiration to be chilled with disappointment at their speedy eclipse. Their death-scene was emphatically a *spectacle*. It possessed neither the simple grandeur of the death of Socrates, nor the calm and trustful spirit that characterized the dying moments of Washington; the one yielding up his spirit as a heathen philosopher, the other dying as a Christian statesman.

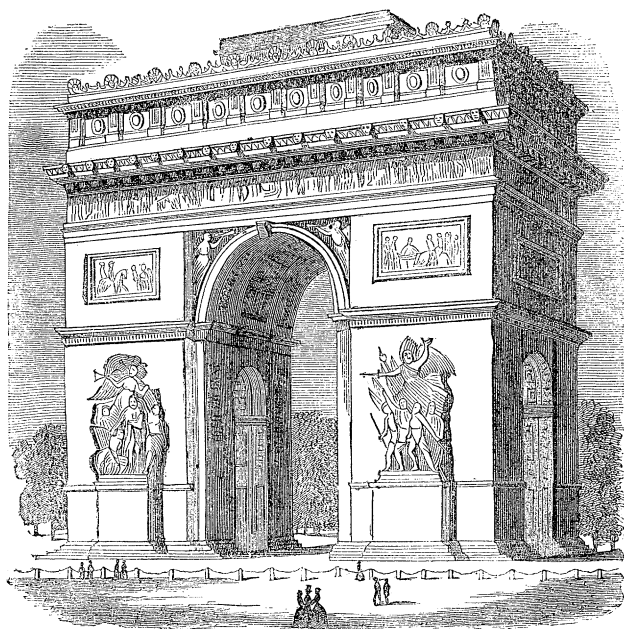
CHAPTER VII.

EMPLOYMENTS OF THE POOR—WHAT THEY EAT—WHAT THEY WEAR—HOW THEY AMUSE THEMSELVES.

THE French government aims to produce upon the stranger the same effect from the *tout ensemble* of Paris, as does the belle of the Champs Elysées by the perfection of her toilet upon the idlers of all nations who frequent that fashionable promenade. Both are got up with a nice regard for admiration. Both are equally successful in their effort. We admire the lady as one does a coquettishly arranged bouquet, too content with its general beauty to think of criticising its details. So with the public edifices and grounds ; we pay them at once and involuntarily the homage of our admiration, receiving at each glance the intuitive satisfaction that arises from the presence of the beautiful, whether made by man or born of God. I am not sure that an invidious comparison does not force itself at once upon Americans at the too perceptible contrast between the noble avenues, spacious palaces, beautiful places, and tasteful gardens ; in short, between the treasures of their rich and venerable, and the meagreness of our juvenile and practical civilization. The advantages in respect to architecture, the ornamental arts, and even the scale and elegance of the more humble requirements of the necessities of the age, in the shape of bridges, rail-road stations, and public edifices generally, are greatly on their side. If the comparison stopped here, we should be filled with envy. With too many it does not go farther, and they dishonor their native land by condemning in her the want of a taste for the mere lust of the eye,

which, if unduly cultivated, would go far to develop with us those social contrasts which here mark the extremes of society.

One instance will suffice to illustrate the ruling passion of the various governments of France. The most conspicuous, but by no means the most costly of the embellishments of Paris, is the Arch of Triumph at the Barrier de l'Etoile. A nobler



ARCH OF TRIUMPH.

and more commanding monument at the entrance of a capital no other city can boast. From its elevated position, it towers far above all that portion of Paris, conspicuous to a great distance in the country, like a colossal gateway to a city of giants. It is simply an architectural ornament, useful only as affording

from its top the best coup d'œil of Paris. The glory of exhibiting this arch has cost Frenchmen two millions of dollars additional taxes. Even they, while boasting its possession, consider it an apt illustration of their proverbial expression in regard to prodigality, "to throw money out of the windows."

Were American citizens called to decide between the appropriation of two millions of dollars to a similar construction or for purposes of education, the schools would get it. Not so in France. The gold goes for ornament, the copper for instruction. This one fact explains in a great measure the wide distinction of ruling principles between the two nations. We have less elegance, but more comfort. Our wealth is diffused and society equalized. Democracy, like water, constantly seeks a level, and with us, imperfect as it is, it is still the most comfortable assurance for future progress in all that makes humanity at large wise and happy that the world has yet seen. France, on the contrary, fluctuating between the extremes of aristocratic conservatism and democratic destructiveness, though slowly winning her way toward the goal of human rights, still exhibits contrasts in the social scale which painfully mark the poverty and ignorance of her masses. I have elsewhere shown that out of the million souls that people Paris, eight hundred thousand are in a state of either uncertainty as to their future or absolute want. No civilization which produces such results can be rightly based. The citizens of the United States may well spare France the pride of her monuments, if their cost is the indigence of her people.

The better to picture the straits for subsistence to which the luxurious civilization of European aristocracy compels the masses, I shall draw again upon the streets for specimens of the HONEST modes of livelihood of this capital. Without a glance at both sides of the social panorama, the American is very indifferently qualified to judge of the comparative merits

of the institutions of his own and other countries. The least a traveler can do for his native land is to gather for it, be it in ever so humble a measure, the wisdom, whether of example or warning, of those he visits. By thus doing, his expatriation may not be without benefit to his fellow-citizens. If in this series of sketches of foreign life I succeed in amusing, I shall be gratified; but if, as is my higher aim, I am able to convey a correct moral, my satisfaction will be more complete.

It is with the female sex that the comparison of occupations affords the greatest variety of strange examples to American eyes. Accustomed as we are to invest woman with the associations of a "home," it is with repugnance at first that we see her so isolated from her natural protector, leading a life equally as distinct and independent in the strife of existence as his. Marriage has not the same heart-interpretation as with us. It is a union of interests, seldom of affections. A business arrangement for mutual convenience, leaving to the man the same latitude of bachelor instincts as before, and bestowing upon the woman a liberty to be purchased in no other way. But the aspect of feminine isolation from domestic relations is most strongly marked in the extensive class of shop-girls and all those compelled to gain a precarious subsistence by their individual exertions. They live alone, or in couples, allured by every species of dissipation of this sensuous city, and without other restraint or surveillance than their own dubious standard of propriety or morals. Their religious education, when they have any, is confined to the pageantry of Catholic worship. While the daughters of the rich are brought up in an almost conventual seclusion, scrupulously guarded both from the seductions and contact of the world, these girls, unsheltered by family roofs, are exposed at a tender age to all its trying experiences. Left thus dependent upon their exertions and prudence, they early acquire a fund of worldly knowl-

edge, which soon resolves itself into a code of manners for their guidance, and gives them that singularly self-possessed and independent air, which with us is the exclusive heritage of our male youth. The American female relies upon the rougher sex in all matters that bring her into immediate contact with the grosser and practical elements of society. The French woman, on the contrary, acts for herself as freely as would a man under similar circumstances. Hence, in one country, woman preserves the retiring, timid delicacy most attractive in her character; in the other, she assumes an independence of action that renders her at once a self-relying, shrewd being, as capable of living a "bachelor" life as man himself. The one calls forth our respectful tenderness from her graceful dependence. Her innocence is her security. The other demands our respect as an equal in worldly knowledge and capacity of action. She challenges our gallantry for the same reason that she fails to win our attention. On all points she is armed against the one, and in every respect is independent of the other. Her policy is in the finesse of the head. The strength of the other lies in the sincerity of her heart. Whether the acquired independence of the one is a fair equivalent for the winning dependence of the other, each individual will judge according to his taste.

In this relation, however, I can not pass over a significant fact in the results of the French system of female education. If the exposed lives of the poorer class of girls lead them almost inevitably into vice, or forming temporary connections in lieu of the more permanent ties of marriage, the tendency of the unnatural seclusion practiced in some of the higher seminaries of learning is even worse. From being never trusted, the girls become adroit hypocrites, and, as with Eve, the apple of knowledge, though tabooed, is covertly plucked. A celebrated institution near Paris, in the charge of government,

where five hundred daughters, sisters, and nieces of the members of the Legion of Honor receive a highly-finished education, under rules of almost military severity, furnishes a large proportion of the fair and frail sirens of the Quartier Brèda. Undoubtedly the difficulty of negotiating marriages without



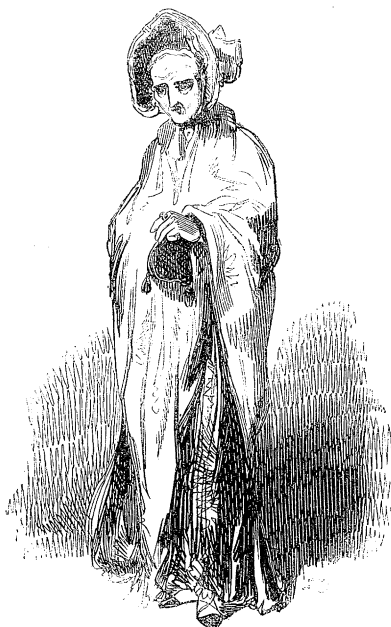
YOUTH.

the indispensable dowry or "dot" is an active promoter of illicit connections between beauty and wealth. Faulty and inexorable social laws are equally as accountable for this state of morals as individual frailty.

It is from this class that we can select the most striking vicissitudes of female career. In their youth, redolent with loveliness, buried as it were in the wealth laid at their feet, the mistresses of many hearts and purses, living in apartments more luxuriously furnished than those of any palace, daily exhibiting their envied charms in sumptuous equipages in the Bois de Boulogne, and nightly outshining aristocratic beauty at the Opera, they purchase their short-lived sensuous career

at the expense of an age of regretful misery and repulsive employments.

Look on this picture and then on that. Lovers and loveliness have fled. The triumphs of vanity are now succeeded by the retributions of want and age. Folly and extravagance have proved but indifferent foster-parents for infirmity and loss of beauty. The harvest of sin is being reaped on her withered, charmless frame. Can you recognize in this sad ruin the joyous being whose life but a few years before was



AGE

one holiday? Perhaps she was an actress, and you yourself covered her with flowers and bravos. Her garments are now the mockery of former elegance, even as she is the phantom of previous loveliness. She takes your cloak, and offers you a programme or cricket as you enter your "loge," for she has become a simple "ouvreuse," or door-keeper to the boxes at the theatres and opera-houses, but too grateful to receive a few sous where once she threw away gold. In Paris there are four hundred and sixty-seven "ouvreuses," who depend for their subsistence upon the voluntary contributions of the public. Some favored few are said to gain 2000 francs a year, while others are reduced to as many hundreds. They have the privilege of dying in a hospital, and being buried in the



THE GRISETTE.

common "fosse" or pit. The situation of the "ouvreuse," although it requires the possessor to be up until after midnight, is one of the easiest, or, as Americans would say, one of the most genteel resorts for feminine decay and poverty.

Many of the occupations which females fill are such as can have their origin only in the fertile soil of a rank, aristocratic civilization. They are of every shade of integrity and crime, refinement and grossness, from that of the honest and virtuous grisette, who laboriously plies her needle in her cosy garret room, to the political spy, fashionable pimp, or haggish corrupter of virginity in the pay of hoary debauchism, both ex-



THE TEMPTERS AND THE TEMPTED.



THE DOG-SHEARER.



PEDDLER AT LARGE.



THE GARBAGE-GATHERER.



THE HAT-SELLER.

hibiting in their physiognomies the traces of every vice that degrades human nature. They include alike the bewitching glove-mender of Sterne, the more stately elegance of the "dames du comptoir," and the wretched vender of old hats, or peddler of all wares, and agent for every necessity which pride, poverty, or shame seek to hide from daylight. Even here we have not sounded the depths of the more laborious and disgusting of the female out-door employments. At all seasons, the shearer of dogs and cats, and the gatherer of garbage, whose sweetest bouquet is a reeking pile of street filth, are to be seen pursuing their calling. They are worthy of all commendation for their determination to earn their daily bread rather by the sweat of their brows than the charity of the public or the chances of crime.

The female copyists at the Louvre are a numerous class, with a decidedly artistic air in the negligence of their toilets. They find time both to fulfill their orders, and have an eye to spare to the public, particularly to their male brethren. When they are employed upon *ordered* copies, they work with assiduity; when not, they more agreeably divide their time between complaisant beaux and the arts. As for the rest, they have for their home, during most of the week, the comfortable galleries of the finest museum in Europe; inhabiting a palace by day, and sleeping in a garret at night. The patronage of the government is sometimes ludicrously applied toward the fine arts. An applicant for a post in the bureau of the telegraph received an order to execute a bust in marble—not an impossibility, if he allowed himself the same latitude of execution which a certain Minister of the Interior is said to have advised to the widow of an employé, powerfully recommended to his favorable consideration. He gave her an order for a copy of the mammoth painting of Jesus at the house of Martha and Mary, by Paul Veronese.

"But, Monsieur the Minister, I do not know how to paint; I never touched a brush in my life."

"Never mind: take the copy. You can have it done by another, and arrange to receive the pay." The obliging counsel was not lost.

I have given but a few out of the extraordinary employments of the female sex at Paris—enough, however, to show that there is a wide difference between the relative positions of the poorer classes in France and the United States. I should be doing injustice to the most formidable type of all were I to omit the renowned "Dames des Halles," a class of women not only numerous, and in many instances wealthy, but of sufficient political importance to cause their good will to be courted by Louis Napoleon, by fêtes, balls, and courteous speeches, which they return by complimentary deputations empowered to salute him on both cheeks, and leave in his hands bouquets of well-nigh sufficient volume as to entirely eclipse him. These ladies possess a vocabulary of their own, the most compendious of all idioms in terms of vulgar vituperation. Their profession, as one may readily conceive, is not always of the sweetest nature; but why they, of all the laboring sisterhood, should be so particularly ambitious of distinguish-



DAME DES HALLES.

ing themselves by the use of an "argot" terrible to uninitiated ears, it is not so easy to conceive. The highest exertion of their intellectual faculties is to coin new expressions for their slang war-whoop. Yet even on this ground they are sometimes defeated by a battery of epithets more stunning than their own. The last case was as follows: A Polytechnic student, seeing a formidable-looking specimen of this genus barricaded by monsters of lobsters and huge piles of fish, laid a wager with his companion that he would "dismount" her (so the term goes) with her own weapons. "Done," said his friend, as he placed himself safely behind an avalanche of vegetables to see the fun.

"How do you sell this carp, mother?"

"That carp? That is worth one hundred sous if it is worth one franc, my blackguard! But, as you are a pretty boy, you shall take it for four francs and a half. Eh! it is given away at that; but one has a weakness for youth."

"I will give you only thirty sous, and you shall cook it for me."

"Stop! don't bother me! You want to buy a broth under market price. Let me look a bit at the little fellow! Three bantam chickens and he, by my faith, would go well before a coach."

The fish-woman, like a locomotive, had now started, at one jump, at a prodigious rate, and one might as well have attempted to stop with a straw the one as the other. The reader will not, I am sure, exact of me a repetition of her tirade. The vocabulary of oaths and blackguardism was never nigher being entirely exhausted. Want of breath at last brought her to a half-halt, when her boyish opponent, putting himself into a tragic attitude, broke in with,

"Will you hold your tongue, frightful hydrocyanure of potash! execrable chlorozoic acid! hideous logarithmic progres-

sion, indissoluble hygromètre of Saussure, detestable square of the hypotheneuse, abominable parallélipiped!" and on rushed the student of the Polytechnic School, sure of never being repulsed on this ground, through the entire chemical, algebraic, and geometrical nomenclature, setting at defiance all scientific arrangement in his zeal to overwhelm his foe. At first the fire flashed from her eyes as her excited imagination conceived every abominable reproach to be conveyed in the meaning of the incomprehensible words that, for the first time, saluted her ear. As he proceeded, she became stupefied, and, as an expiring effort of despair, shouted out to know from what infernal regions he had stolen such a diabolical array of abuse. The young man paused for a moment, and recommenced with the classification of plants and the cragged terms of geology. "For the sake of the Holy Virgin, stop; I give in. You are no white-nose, my little fellow! Take the carp and welcome," said the dame, in the excess of her admiration at an exhibition of lingual power that left hers far in the shade.

In the United States we have a monotonous display of broadcloth and silks, with no distinguishing features by which one class of citizens can be discriminated from the other. The individual alone may be remarked by his taste, but his species can not be detected by his dress. Not so in Paris. Every occupation has its fashion, its cut, its air, as distinct and discernible as the uniforms of the army. Each is so fitted to its costume that it would be at home in no other. The washerwoman can never be mistaken for the cook, nor the nurse for the grisette. The bourgeois remains the bourgeois; the footman never burlesques the general of division; the workman no more thinks of leaving his blouse than the oyster his shell; in fact, each individual of this city is as readily classified by his costume as any animal by its skin and shape. Their indoor localities are also as distinct as those of the brute varie-

ties of the animal kingdom. All cleave to their particular quarters with the adhesiveness of a special instinct. Like strong and separate currents, their outer edges only mingle, filling the thoroughfares with a picturesque crowd, on which one is never tired of gazing.

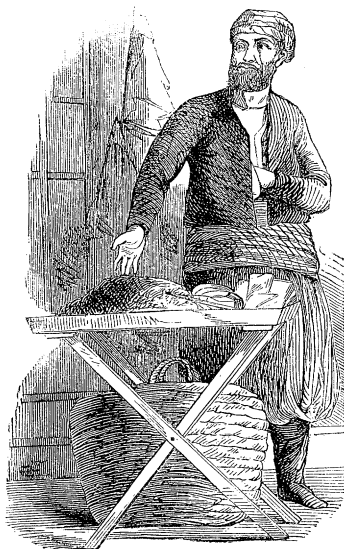
The difference between the two nations is equally as perceptible in the tariff of prices. We generalize; they particularize. We name a round sum, which covers all charges; their first charge is but a foundation for an infinitesimal dose of others. In New York, call a carriage, and the driver takes you and your baggage to a given point for a round sum. In Paris, attempt the same, and the result will be as follows: Your baggage is to be brought down; that calls for a porter and one payment. You have called a coach, and, as you are stepping in, a "commissionaire" takes hold of the door, and, with cap in hand, asks you to remember him: his service has been to shut it; payment No. 2. You stop; another commissionaire opens the door; payment No. 3. You pay the driver his legal fare—payment No. 4—and think you are through. But do not take such consolation to your purse. Monsieur has forgotten the "*pour boire*," politely remarks Jehu, and you derive from him the gratifying information that custom allows him to demand the wherewithal to buy a dram, and this makes payment No. 5, for the simple operation of getting into a hackney-coach. This principle extends through every branch of pecuniary intercourse, and, after all, is a wise one, for, by this rule, we pay only for services rendered and dinners eaten.

With the term "Paris fashions" we associate only ideas of periodical importations of novelties of refinement and elegance in dress and style of living. But this view is as imperfect as that of judging of the actual condition of France only by its parks and palaces. The female sex, as it appears to me, take

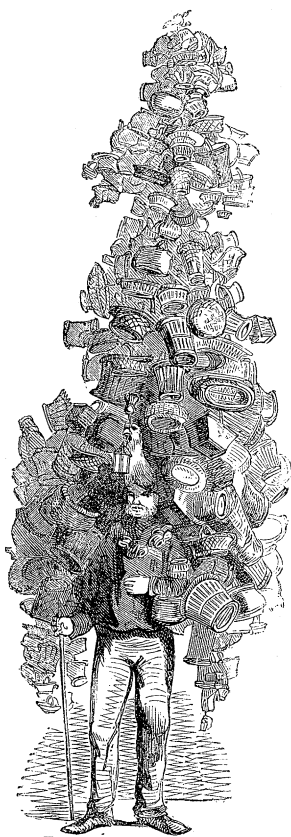
the first choice of employments, leaving to men such only as they do not find to their interest or taste. The life-sketches already given show that these are sufficiently bizarre to excite our surprise, though not always our envy. There are certain provinces that appear to be neutral ground, such as those of street-minstrels, chiffonniers, peddlers, newspaper-venders, and "merchants" of crimes, as the ill-omened cryers of the prolific catalogue of tragic events are technically called. These birds of evil announce, with startling intonations, their list of assassinations, poisonings, suicides, and capital executions, extracted from the judicial journals, for sale at the fixed price of a sou each. Those who have a keen taste for the horrible can gratify it at a cheap rate by the inspection of the "merchant" and his stock in trade. Like the vulture, he appears to grow foul from the garbage that supplies his food.



MERCHANT OF CRIMES.



DATE-SELLER.



BASKET-SELLER.

The "date-merchant" must necessarily be a man, as no female could furnish the requisite amount of beard to counterfeit satisfactorily the Turk. This disguise is assumed to prove the Oriental origin of his fruit, and to strike the imagination of his juvenile patrons.

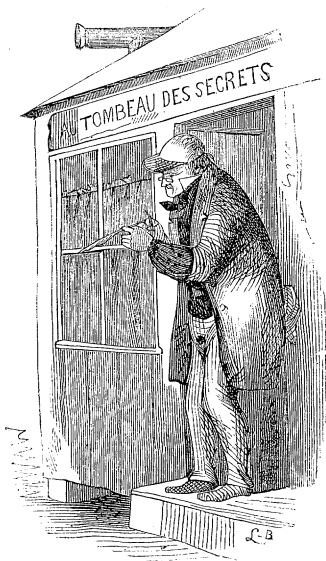
No one will dispute the inclination of the female sex to carry their heads high, but we doubt whether one has ever been found to compete with the basket-merchant in his extraordinary head-dress, moving as easily and gracefully through the streets with this Babel of straw and wicker-work on his head as if it were simply the latest style of coiffure. Of course, he can only put out with his pyramidal bazar on a still day, as a head wind, or any wind at all, would speedily bare his head, and send his baskets flying in all directions, a joyous fête for avaricious urchins, but ruinous to him.

The merchant of "death to the rats" belongs to an expiring race. Long have the cats looked with envy upon his spoils, hung upon a pole, with which he walks the streets, typical of his profession. But they who have longest known his meagre countenance will soon know him no longer. Whether any of

the "dinner for seventy-five centimes" restaurants will raise their bill of fare on account of his exit remains to be seen. A company has been formed, with a capital of three hundred thousand francs, for the extirpation of all the rats of Paris. If a cordon of cats is to be established around the city to keep out the country rats, hare will become a rare dish in more than one cheap restaurant.



DEATH TO RATS.



THE TOMB OF SECRETS.

The last masculine occupation that I shall cite is one which no female ever aspired to, from the consciousness that it exacts, perhaps, the only accomplishment that she despairs of attaining. Its motto is "the Tomb of Secrets," and its chief-est attribute, silence. The professor must be more dumb than Memnon, but with an ear as keen and comprehensive as that of Dionysius. He is a depositary of secrets of the heart and

hopes of the purse, a framer of petitions, the agent of intrigues—in fact, a confessor-general to the unlettered multitude, reducing into a transmissible shape the desires of the unfortunate Monsieur or Madame to whom the mysteries of writing remain a hieroglyphical puzzle. Their numbers are sufficiently indicative of the ignorance of the inhabitants at large. Yet it often happens that the silence of his mummified existence is uninterrupted for hours. Then, perhaps, his skill is taxed by a tricky cook, who, perplexed by the unreconcilable balances of her receipts and disbursements, seeks an accomplice to reduce her accounts to the required condition to pass examination. To live, it is necessary to be silent, yet a blush will sometimes steal over his withered cheek as he obediently enters in the account the bread bought by the cook at one sou, charged to Madame, the mistress, at two sous, and thus, by a discreet use of the rule of multiplication, finally obtains the coveted balance.

The American laborer, who consumes in one day more meat than the family of a French “ouvrier” in a week, would famish upon their bill of fare. The necessity which begets many of their employments pays, also, but poor wages. Yet what would be considered in the United States as a tribute fit only for the swill-tub, would, by skill and economy, be made to furnish a welcome meal. The dietetic misery of the former country would prove the savory competency of the latter. But, whatever may be the composition of their frugal repasts, they are eaten with a zest and good-humor that are not always guests at more sumptuous repasts. The American laborer eats the same quality of meat and bread as his employer. Either of these, to the French workman, would be equivalent to a *fête*. His bread is coarser, meat inferior, and throughout his whole diet there is the same difference in quality as in his clothes. Many of the necessaries of his American brother he

only knows by seeing them in shop windows. We are also able to rear Louvres and Versailles; to build cathedrals and erect triumphal gateways; but, in our present stage of civilization, they would take the chicken out of every workman's pot, and drive his children from the common schools to the fields and factories.

The science of living well at a cheap rate is not understood in the United States. General necessity has not as yet begotten that special knowledge. In Paris, thirteen sous will provide a tolerable dinner of a dish of soup, loaf of bread, and a plate of meat and vegetables "*mêlé*." This species of healthy and economical alimentation is the heritage of a large class of workmen, and even of impoverished students and artists, who seek these cheap restaurants under the convenient cloud of the incognito. There are other resorts where they can eat at the rate of fifteen sous by the *first hour*, eight sous by the second, and so on, the chief diet being roast veal, as good a name as any other, provided the alimentary faith is unshaken. We even find dinners at *four* sous, composed of four courses, as follows:

Vegetable soup	1 sou.
Bread	1 "
Montagnards (great red beans)	1 "
Coffee with sugar	1 "

or four sous per head. It is needless to observe that to swallow the "*coffee*" (which in Paris costs forty cents a pound) requires even more faith than the roast veal or a Romish miracle. Not a few sewing-girls, or domestics out of place, dine daily on a sou's worth of bread. The table-service of the dinners at four sous is very simple. The table is an enormous block of wood, the surface of which is dug out into the form of bowls and plates. To each hole are attached, with iron chains, knives, forks, and spoons of the same metal. A buck-

et of water dashed over the whole serves to "lay the table" for the diners next in course.

The examples already given are sufficient to illustrate the modes of livelihood and the quality of the diet of this class of the population. To finish the sketch, it is necessary to show how they amuse and whence they clothe themselves. Education and religion would, with us, be the primary objects of inquiry, but here they are lost sight of in the furor of amusement. Their colleges and churches are the low theatres that line the Boulevard du Temple, aptly designated as the Boulevard of Crimes, from the characteristics of the plays here performed. These are applauded by their mongrel audiences, a large proportion of which are children, nurses, and even infants, in proportion as they are filled with the horrible, supernatural, obscene, vulgar, and blasphemous. Murders, fights, licentiousness, assassinations, double-entendre, and the coarsest jokes, are their stock in trade. The most sacred subjects, even death, and the tenants of the grave, and spirits of heaven and hell, are ridiculously parodied. Their very exaggeration of what is false or low in human nature makes them indeed amusing, but no one can witness their performances, interrupted as they are by the stunning shouts of the enthusiastic spectators, without being convinced that they are powerful auxiliaries to infidelity and crime. Their influences are debasing, promotive of skepticism, and particularly destructive to the quiet virtues of domestic life. When the public, as has happened within three years, crowd its area to see its youngest and handsomest actress appear as Eve on the stage, entirely *naked*, with the exception of a scanty piece of flesh-colored silk tightly drawn over the loins, we may safely conclude that the habitués of the "Boulevard des Crimes" are not over-nice in their moral standard for the drama. Adultery is the staple joke, and a deceived husband a legitimate butt. Even at

the Grand Opera, female nudity commands a high premium, and at all, modesty or veneration would be considered as the affectations of prudery.

If the theatre may be considered as their church, the “estaminets,” or cafés, where smoking is allowed, and the dram-shops, may as appropriately be classed as their common schools. The pleasures of the French are not of a fireside character: publicity gives them their chiefest zest. Consequently, the time which rightfully belongs to the family is devoted to the “estaminet.” True, the bachelor lives or the

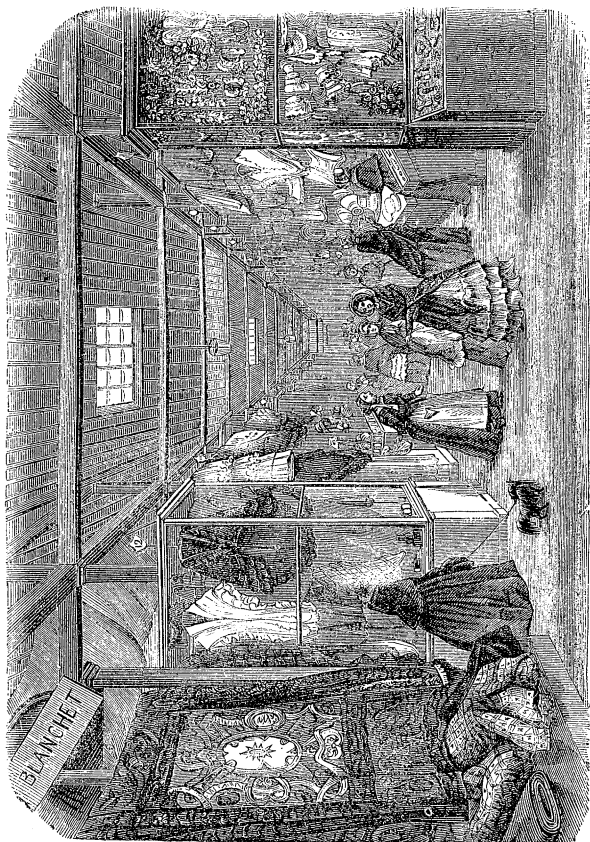


ESTAMINET.

forbidding homes of the lower orders would seem to open to them no other resource, and at them they can enjoy the fire and lights, which are often beyond their means under their own roofs. I do not, however, inquire into the causes, but speak only of the effects of existing customs. Evenings thus spent amid the fumes of the vilest of tobacco, and the excitement of

equally bad liquors, make fit disciples for the barricades, but poor citizens of a republic.

The market of the Temple, or, as it is more commonly called, that of old linen, is one of the most extraordinary sights of Paris. It is a huge wooden bazar, open on all sides, divided into four grand and innumerable little avenues, and cut up into



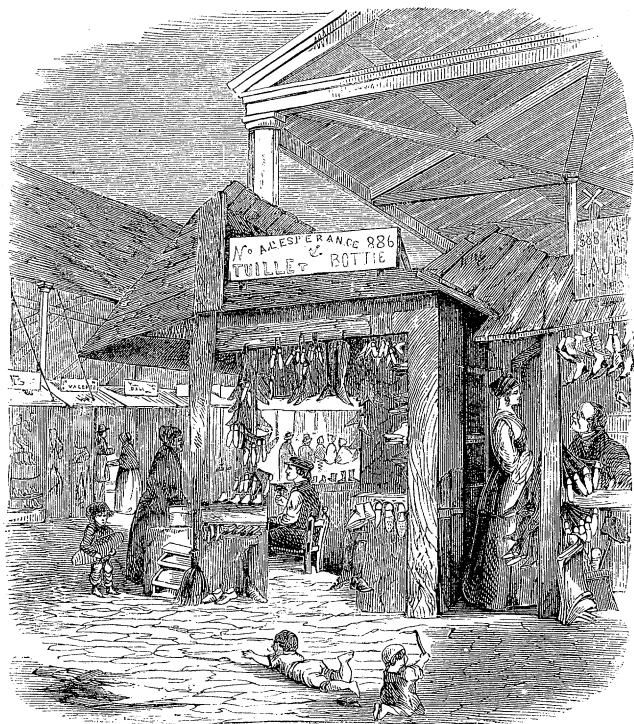
LE CARRÉ DU PALAIS ROYAL.

1888 miniature shops, rented by the city at thirty-three sous each weekly, producing an annual income of about \$32,000. There are four quarters, known respectively as the "Carré du Palais Royal," a sort of parody on the true Palais Royal, comprising the silk, lace, and glove merchants, and the venders of every species of foppery required to make up the second-rate lion, or copy of a fine lady. Here, too, are the traps or baiting-places of sellers of bric-à-brac, who waylay their prey in the vestibules, and thence conduct them to their rich wares close by, buried in the most frightful of houses. Among them we find furniture of buhl, porcelain of Sèvres and Japan, a world of curiosities, and an untold wealth of satins, and the richest of merchandise, sold cheaper, because stored cheaper, than in the luxurious shops of the Rue Vivienne and Rue de la Paix. The stupefied customer, who sought a cheap bagatelle, finds himself confronted in these obscure retreats by artistic caprices to be had for no less than 10,000 francs each.

The second quarter, the Pavilion of Flora, a little less aristocratic than the preceding, comprises the more useful household objects, of a cheap and dubious character.

In the third, "le Pou Volant" (the reader will pardon me the translation), rags, old iron, and indescribable wares predominate. The fourth, and most hazardous, is "the Black Forest," a medley of every cheap abomination, new and second-hand.

This bazar has its peculiar slang and types of inhabitants. The little shops are called "*ayons*." Hugo naively remarks, why not "*haillons*." The curious observer can penetrate the first two quarters without other inconvenience than repeated but courteous applications for his custom. But it requires considerable courage and self-possession to penetrate the mysteries of the "Pou Volant" and the "Forêt Noire." Harpies, scarcely recognizable as of the female sex, beset his progress,



THE PAVILION OF FLORA.

seize him by the arms or garments, and menace in their rivalry literally to divide him into halves. These runners are termed, in the argot idiom, "*rôleuses*." Escaping them, he is assailed by a flanking fire of direct apostrophes, half in argot, from their employers. "My amiable sir, buy something—buy—you must buy. What does Monsieur want? a carpet—a coat to go to a ball—a cloak, first quality—a '*niolle*,' good quality—a *décrochez-moiça*, for Madame, your wife—patent



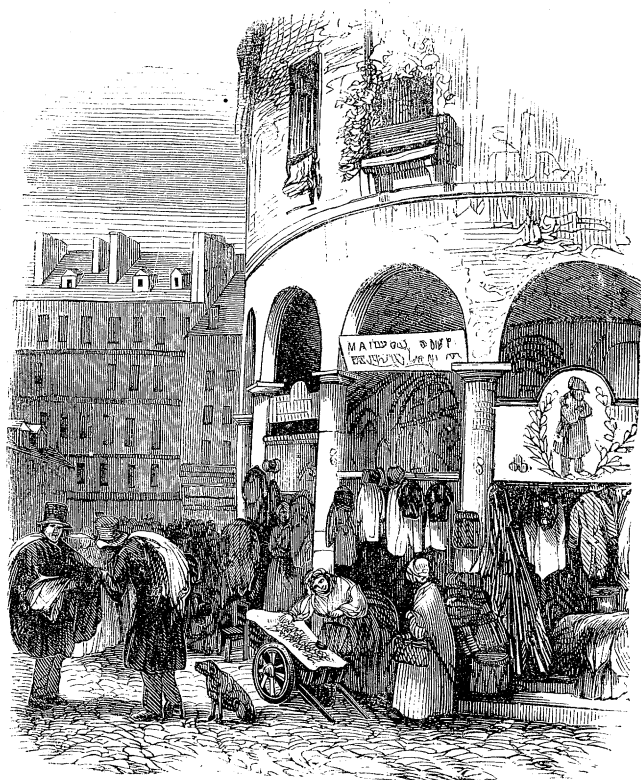
LA FORET NOIRE.

boots—an umbrella—a '*péluse*,' all the '*frusques*' of St. John, at your choice."

Should the adventurer continue on his way without replying to the temptations of these commercial syrens, a torrent of mingled abuse and irony is discharged upon him. "Ah! indeed! how much he buys! Very well—one must excuse him. What did he come here for, this picayune fellow? I say, Monsieur, let us, at the least, mend the elbows of your coat. He carries his body well, to be sure. *Ohé! pané!* Let the

gentleman pass. He is an ambassador on his way to the court of Persia. Hei!"

Just beyond this bazar rises the "Ronde du Temple," which is to its neighbor what the common graves at Père la Chaise are to the rest of the cemetery. It is the receptacle of all the *débris* of human attire, too mean to find shelf-room even in the market of "old linen." One sees a pandemoni-



ROTONDE DU TEMPLE

um of rags, tattered garments, rent boots, old hats, and every object upon which the heart of a scavenger Jew dotes. Costumes which have survived the saturnalia of many a carnival, and uniforms discharged by the order of the day or the death of their proprietors, dating from the empire down, theatrical wardrobes too venerable for active service, and fashions which have long since been driven from human backs, are here mingled in one picturesque equality of poverty. Even out of such a collection Parisian taste contrives to make a not unpleasing effect. As with Parisian pauperism, it has a cleaner and more cheerful look than English indigence and old clothes.

The Rotonde is circular, with a cloister of forty-four arcades in the exterior. A damp and dark court occupies the interior. It is a species of low rival to the bazar, and limited in its circumference; but it is computed to lodge more than a thousand inhabitants. They drink and dine at the neighboring wine-shops and cafés, known as the Elephant, Two Lions, and kindred names. At these, brandy is eight sous the bottle, a ragoût three sous, and a cup of coffee one cent. There are resorts still cheaper and lower, such as the "Field of the Wolf," frequented by the most brutal of the denizens of this quarter, who in their orgies not unfrequently mingle blood with the blue fluid that they swallow for wine. The greater part of these dram-shops add to their debasing occupation that of usury. But, as we have now arrived at that point where the line which marks the boundary between legitimate industry and crime becomes indistinct, I stop.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PAST AND PRESENT OF THE STREETS OF PARIS.

CHANGE, more than growth, is the prominent trait of European cities. It is true that some increase with a speed that leaves but little advantage on the side of American progress, yet, in general, that which chiefly distinguishes them from our towns is the substitution of the new forms of civilization for the old, or, as we of the nineteenth century are vain enough to term it, improvement. Old buildings are razed, to be succeeded by modern palaces, and old habits perish with them. Not only the aspect, but the entire life of streets, is metamorphosed. Customs that had their origin in the inconvenience and semi-barbarism of the Middle Ages, cease as they come in contact with the generation that builds rail-roads and talks by the telegraph. We demand elegance as well as utility. No city has more to boast of in this respect, since the dawn of the present century, than Paris. It is rapidly realizing its proud claim of being the capital of the world. Soon the few lingering remains of the domestic life and manners of the subjects of Charles IX., and the times when Catholic and Protestant met only to revile and strike, will have disappeared under the reforming trowel of ripening civilization. House and hotel, the plebeian homes of the slayers and the slain of St. Barthélemi, as well as the courtly residences of the noblest of its butchers and their victims, are being leveled to the ground, not one by one, but by whole streets and squares, that their descendants may breathe freer air, and sleep in more spacious

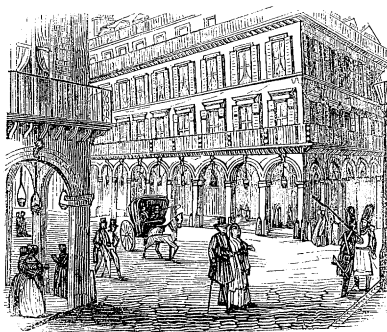
chambers. Yet, with a taste that contrasts strangely, though happily, with the fanaticism that slew Jean Guigon while at work upon the Louvre, every relic of his chisel is now preserved and restored with sacred care, as the just tribute to a genius which another age may equal, but not excel. He who would see *old* Paris must needs haste, otherwise the garments of the *new* will have soon shut it wholly out from sight. It well repays the trouble of the traveler, whose relish of modern ease has not extinguished within him the desire to contrast his luxury with the luxury of his ancestors—by way of Adam—to penetrate into the narrow, crooked streets, so crooked that, like some sticks, it seems impossible for them to lie still, that now contain what remains of old Paris. Quaint old human rookeries look tottling down upon him. Turrets and towers gray with the dust and taste of antiquity; fanciful carvings of saintly subjects, proving the orthodoxy of their builders; houses that lean forward and lean backward, that lean upon their neighbors and their neighbors lean upon them, so irregular, so projecting, now this way and now that way, story overlapping story, gable ends next to more slightly fronts, that he will come to the conclusion that they were built long before the invention of the rule and plumb-line, or that the only rule observed was that of contrariwise. They are now uniform



OLD PARIS.

enough in their exhibition of poverty. Its rags and squalor are confined to their intricate recesses. What is seen indicates thrift and industry, and many ways of livelihood not yet domesticated in more fortunate America. The hotels and buildings of greatest pretensions have been converted into manufactories and "magasins." They are now the abodes of vast stores of costly merchandise, like the butterfly in its chrysalis state, with which Paris caters to the taste and vanity of the entire world.

Such is the aspect of old Paris. The change may be better appreciated by a glance at the corner of the *Rue de la Paix* in new Paris, the Paris of the nineteenth century, as contrasted



NEW PARIS.

with the Paris of the sixteenth. The corridors or covered passages which distinguish this style of modern architecture are worthy of being adopted in all climates, for they afford to the pedestrian an equal protection against rain, sun, and snow, and are sufficiently lofty to al-

low beneath two stories, the *rez-de-chaussée* and the *entresol*, the one convenient for shops and the other for small families. Could both sides of Broadway be rebuilt after this plan, throwing the present sidewalks into the street, it would furnish the much-needed room for carriages, and only abstract from the lowest story of the buildings sufficient space for the accommodation of foot-passengers. New York would then present not only the finest, but most comfortable street in the world. Nor is there any other way by which she can secure equal room

at less expense. Paris, in another feature, affords an example of judicious use of back lots, by the erection of "passages" or arcades, which run from street to street through the centre of blocks, paved with marble, and protected by glass roofs from the extremes of temperature and bad weather. In them, shopping is done under cover. The most fashionable, such as the Passages Choiseul, Panoramas, and Jouffroy, embrace in their supplies every want to which human flesh is heir. One living in their vicinity finds them decidedly convenient, and is able to despise an umbrella, and snap his fingers in the face of Jehu. They afford also very lively promenades, especially when brilliantly lighted up of an evening. The Passage Delorme, near which I lived, not three hundred feet in length, contained a café, restaurant, optician, book-store, reading-room, hair-dresser, boot-maker, every shop and every variety connected with male and female toilets, a fruit-market, cigars, curiosity-shop, a boot-black, and even "a cabinet d'aisance," kept, as all are, by a woman. In short, I can not name what it did not contain that a person of moderate wants might desire. The Choiseul and the galleries of the Palais Royal embrace theatres in their attractions. Their convenience, and economy of ground otherwise difficult to dispose of, are worthy of imitation, as a *paying* speculation elsewhere.

The garden of the Palais Royal possesses a curious attraction, which never fails to draw a crowd at meridian of a bright day. It consists of a little swivel, so connected with a sun-dial that, when the sun has attained its full elevation, the rays are concentrated upon the touch-hole, and explode the charge, announcing that twelve o'clock has arrived. It serves for a regulator to the numerous watch-making establishments in the vicinity.

The variety of out-door female employments, particularly their nature, and the unintelligible cries attached to some, are

a never-failing source of surprise and amusement to a citizen of a land where all women are "ladies," and all their occupations confined to the house. I would particularly call the attention of female reformers, desirous of enlarging their sphere of action, to a few random specimens taken from the streets of Paris. They will perceive that mankind are not so selfish in Europe as to monopolize all the more active pursuits of life, as they would fain have us believe is the case in America.

First, we have that indispensable being, the cook. Pastry

and bread are unknown arts to her science. The fabrication of them is not her province, but to buy them, as well as the material of those delicious *entremets*, in which she shows her intimate knowledge of stomachic entertainment, is her diurnal duty. It affords her the double pleasure of coquetting with your purse and her lovers. The preparations for one of these gastronomic campaigns is to her a matter of no small moment. However lacking she may have been in her particular kingdom in that desirable quality reckoned next to godliness, her advent in the



THE COOK.

street is signalized by an attention to her toilet, crowned by the indispensable white cap, that renders her quite as conspicuous to others as to herself. She is endowed with a sort

of medium figure and style to those of the two extremes of "bonnes," or servants of all work, alternately the drudges or confidantes of their mistresses, as humor prompts or necessity requires. The first of these work harder and fare worse than Southern slaves. There is no labor, however servile or rude, that they are not called upon to do, besides an indefinite amount of lying for the benefit of their employers. One far uglier than the opposite figure, who had charge of the coarse work of an apartment I hired, interested me



A "BONNE" OF ALL WORK.

much from her invariable good-humor, under labors various and hard enough to have aroused rebellion in a mule. At my request, she gave me an account of her daily duties, which, as they are but the common lot of a very large class of "help" in sunny France, may prove not without a moral to maid and mistress here. "Well, Louise, you keep me waiting a long while after ringing the bell." "Yes, Monsieur, I ask pardon; but I am called upon here in the house, and in the shop, all at once. I run as fast as I can, but I can't quite manage it," she replied, laughing. "You have to work hard, Louise, yet you are always singing and happy." "Yes, Monsieur, I was born to work. Some persons, you know, must work all the time, and I am one. I rise at daylight, and do all the out-door work; then I wait on Mademoiselle—sometimes she is very cross, and makes me go up and down stairs very often (three long flights); then, you know, I

must be in here early, to sweep and put things to rights. Before I am through here, Madame at the shop calls me, and I must leave and go over there (about three hundred feet off); when I get there, perhaps she only wanted to scold a bit, or to pick up her handkerchief. Then, you know, I must come back, and that makes six flights of stairs—that takes up some time. I get through with your rooms by eleven o'clock; then I have two other sets of apartments to take care of. It would not be so bad if it were not for the stairs. I quite forgot, before coming in here I have the breakfast to buy and make for Monsieur and Madame at the shop. Would you believe it, the kitchen is above the shop, a bit of a place no bigger than a cart, and I must buy all my water and wood, and carry it up there myself. There is no drain; and every time I have occasion to empty any water—and when I cook vegetables they make me wash them several times—I must carry all the slops below, and empty them into the gutter. That makes my back ache worst of all. Well, I am no sooner through with the rooms than I have to go out again and buy the dinner, and cook that. Madame is particular, and will have every dish she fancies. After dinner, I go errands or work in the shop. I am at it all the time. By eleven at night they let me go to bed, that is up five flights, if they can't find any thing more for me to do." "But don't you have any time to yourself?" "No, Monsieur, not a minute. Sometimes I want to sew a little at night, but I am so tired that the moment I take my needle I fall asleep." "So you must hire some one to make all your clothes?" "Yes; I have no time for that." "What do they pay you?" "About *seventeen* cents a day; and if I break a cup or tumbler, or injure any thing, they deduct it from my wages. Sometimes the shop-boy breaks an article, and Madame makes me pay for it, because she says it was my business to see it was not broken. I broke a glass in here the other

day, and went and bought another, for fear Madame H—— would find it out and scold me badly. Perhaps you did not know it?" "No, Louise; but you need not do so here, for I see you are very careful. Here, take this money; I will pay for it." "Indeed, Monsieur, you are altogether too good; it was my fault."

On another occasion, I asked her if she knew any one to whom some cast-off clothing would be useful. "Oh yes, Monsieur. If Monsieur will permit it, I should so like to have them for my boy." "What! are you married, Louise?" "Mon Dieu! no," she replied, "no one would marry me; I am too ugly." I ascertained it was for the son of a former mistress, with whom she had lived many years, but who at last became too poor to retain even her, and she had ever since, out of her own meagre earnings, from gratitude for their past kindness, been assisting them. A more contented, laborious, and even happy creature I never saw. Full of the usual faults of French domestics, but with a heart that qualified her for a saint, she was at once the Achates and Griselda of servants. These traits are not rare in this humble class of women.

The fashionable "bonne" is a different being, faithful enough to her mistress when her own interests or vanity are not in conflict. She is the butterfly domestic, but her position is no sinecure, though her wages and fare are better than her more lowly prototype. French families are averse to receiving any



A FASHIONABLE "BONNE."

servants who have lived with foreigners, on the ground of their being spoiled by too much indulgence. With them, in general, they are either allowed a certain sum to find their own wine and food, or are confined to a cheaper diet than that of their employers. These are small matters to mention, but they have an important bearing upon the condition of a numerous class of our fellow-beings. French domestics are born, bred, live, and die such—hopeless and unambitious of a change, unless an opportunity to marry offers, which is, in general, but exchanging one servitude for another. Their existence depending so entirely upon their capacities in this line, they are compelled to educate themselves as a *race* of servants.

Hard as may appear the lot of female domestic servitude, there are rounds in the social ladder still more lowly and severe. The fish-women, as may be seen, are no beauties, nor their occupation one of much refinement. Their slang and patois are most amusing, but too vulgar for repetition, as any one can test by hailing one of these "*dames de la halle*," who are but too prone to give verbal vent to their inward corruption. Woe to the refined ears that irritate their wrath. Billingsgate is sunshine in comparison to the hurri-



FISH-WOMAN.

cane of words that pours from their throats. To escape their notice, one must pass through their quarters very rapidly and abstracted. Even then, random sounds of not the most complimentary nature will greet his ears, unless stopped by the silver tribute in exchange for their scaly wares.

The flower-girls are more amiable specimens of this gender, though not all so *jolie* as my friend present. Age and



FLOWER-GIRL.



CAKE-WOMAN.

ugliness make a singular choice of livelihoods, echoing their monotonous and inconsistent cry with cracked and shrill voices along the streets, "Here is pleasure, ladies, here;" in this instance, the "pleasure" being in their baskets, and not in their faces. Their stock in trade is a kind of cake, made simply of sugar and flour, lighter and thinner than vanity itself. I despair of exhausting the variety of female street illustrations, and therefore content myself with picturing a few only, leaving imagination to supply the blanks. To perfect the descriptions, it would be necessary to give the sounds that announce their various wares and occupations. But words that few Frenchmen even can comprehend are not always to be understood by a stranger, especially when their discordant notes make deafness appear a blessing. Coleridge once asked a London Jew why he cried "*Old clo*" continually instead of "old clothes?" "If you had cried it as long as I have," he replied, "you would not ask why." The



OLD CLOTHES-MAN.

same cause, I presume, operates to produce the contractions and horrible sounds of Paris. Our old rag-woman, though no



RAG-WOMAN.

beauty, is a person of consequence and respectability compared with the last profession in the social chain, that of the "chiffonnier," whose occupation is to glean the garbage of the streets. Yet even from such a beginning fortunes

sometimes arise. I hired for the winter a fine apartment of a "chiffonnier," who had become a merchant of *meubles*, with an annual income of \$8000, and was the owner of a fine country-seat. The "coco"-man, with his liquorice-water drink, in a

sort of pagoda-shaped tin vessel, still cries, "Cool drink!" under a blazing sun, bidding defiance to innovation and more



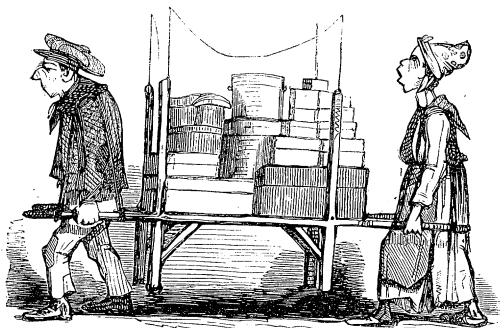
THE "COCO"-MAN.



LA RAVAUDEUSE.

noxious fluids. But the tide of improvement, with the increasing love of "*eau de vies*," will, before long, sweep him off from the public stage. The "*ravaudeuse*," or mender, is fast disappearing, but, as a type of useful industry, is worthy of being perpetuated among the records of past life.

Such are some of the figures of the gratuitous drama of Parisian life. There are others no less ridiculous and infinite-



BOX-SELLERS.

ly more demoralizing (if this term can be applied with propriety to any honest mode of livelihood), which I can not omit without doing injustice to a very conspicuous source of amusement to all classes. I refer to the public balls, commencing with those in which figure the wash-women and the fish-women, with their gallants. These are periodical, generally about "*mi-carême*," or half way through Lent, when Parisian nature can stand the penance of fast and forbearance from the dance no longer, and the Church is compelled to shut its eyes at the last and most riotous of the masked balls, and indulge their more humble professors in one night's trip on the light fantastic toe. The figures here are somewhat original, remarkable rather for weight and emphasis than grace. But to see dancing in all the luxuriance of unrestrained French an-

imation, one must, if in winter, stroll into the Valentino or Salle Paganini, or during the summer into the Bal Mobile, Ranalegh, in the Chateau des Fleurs. In all of these places the dancing is graceful and decorous while the *sergent de ville* looks in, but when his back is turned, or his eyes have assumed a convenient abstraction, fast and furious grows the dance, till, in the excitement and activity of the *cancan*, it



FISH-WOMAN'S BALL.

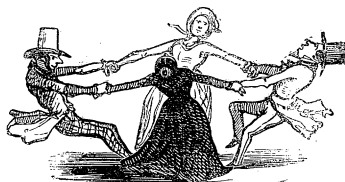


CANCAN LEGER.

would seem as if human muscles, or, at all events, garments, must give way. In the extravagances of the Polynesian dances I thought I had beheld the climax of license in this art, but it was reserved for the beautiful and tastefully-attired mademoiselle of this capital to convince me that I was mistaken. Imagination can not conceive any thing more grotesque than some of its figures. They require, too, an amount of activity little short of the miraculous to attain the full spirit of the dance. In their excitement, the dancers literally strive to jump out of their skins. They make more contortions than an impaled worm, and wind up with a twirl-about that would do credit to the whirling dervishes. The orthodox license of the polka hug is somewhat exceeded, and the embrace of the waltz would astonish the warmest advocates of that dance.



CANCAN FLEURI.



LE TOURNIQUET.

Were it not that at this juncture the police awake to their duties, it would speedily degenerate into a vulgar and disgusting display.

The word Republic sounds so gratefully to American ears, that we are apt, in the first glow of our enthusiasm, to mistake the name for the reality, and give France credit for a democratic spirit that she does not possess. She would, indeed, be a glorious ally to the cause of democracy, and well might we be proud of her conversion, if it had the merit of sincerity. The only democracy she has thus far known is anarchy, from the evils of which she finds her sole remedy in despotism. This is not surprising when we examine her social frame. It is essentially aristocratic throughout. Great triumphs have indeed been won in the cause of civil rights, and feudal servitude perished in 1789; but the habits of centuries have become the social constitution of the people, and can not be exchanged for more healthful institutions at a mere declaration of political rights, or baptizing anew the government. No attempt has yet been made to train or educate the nation into republicanism. Their aristocratic framework of society, the legitimate offspring of their long ages of feudalism and monarchy, is still the moving principle of the nation. In the United States, democracy has fused its followers into one collective mass—the people. This is the only caste, the sole

privileged body we possess. Individuals differ in fortune and position, but they are all compelled to float on the wide, equalizing ocean of democracy, now rising and now disappearing in the waves, as their own merits determine. Our institutions are democratic to the back-bone. Let him who doubts this attempt to ape the aristocrat. He would meet with the same respect as did the jackdaw in the peacock's plumes. In France, society is one of wide distinctions, none the less hereditary by the abortive abolition of titles, or life interest only in patents of nobility. Social tastes are perpetuated from father to son. The rule in France is the exception in the United States, and the exception in the United States is the rule in France. In the former, the servant breeds the servant, the mechanic raises the mechanic, the son of the tradesman stands behind his father's counter, and blood clings to race like original sin. In the latter, the laborer of one generation is the leader of the upper ten thousand in the next. The sailor is the father of the merchant, the mechanic of the statesman, and the farmer of the clergyman. Their children snuff the clod again, and the wheel of society, revolving quickly, regularly, and surely, gives all alike a chance at the top. This is our natural condition, our domestic constitution; and he who has faith in the legitimate ascendancy of virtue and talent, and *their* inherent right to rule, should cherish it as the sacred pledge of the ultimate success of the human race in the career of self-government. In France, eternal distinctions classify the human species. Every caste has its uniform, and each can be as accurately classed by its covering and color as any cockle by the syster



A JUVENILE PORTER.

of Linnæus. There is no mistaking the son of your porter for the heir of your friend the banker. The workmen of France



A YOUNG PEER.



THE "RED." THE "BLOUSE."

have immortalized the blouse, and the sympathizing Red equally disdains the niceties of apparel or cleanliness of person. Every school and trade has its uniform or peculiarities of costume. The grand social aim would seem to be to classify society and isolate its professions, instead of blending them, by uniformity of dress and absence of artificial distinctions, into one national brotherhood. In France, professions, trades, and the various occupations of life are severally consolidated or protected by civic privileges, monopolies, or other legal distinctions, which perpetuate a spirit of class, and render it difficult for one to pass into the boundaries of another. But it is not my design in this place to particularize more than the fact of the existence of these social distinctions.

CHAPTER IX.

SKETCHES ABOVE GROUND AND BELOW GROUND.

Who fails to notice in the streets of Paris those long, lugubrious processions of ark-like coaches, blacker within and without than ravens, drawn by heavy black horses, with coal-black harness and plumes, and guided by drivers in the same sombre livery, the *tout ensemble* affording the greatest conceivable contrast to the brilliant equipages so rapidly circulating about them? As they trail through the streets with slow and solemn pace, they appear to be so many clumsily-carved masses of jet, overspread with palls, and animated with just sufficient life to grope their way blindly back to the dark mine whence they issued. In their presence the sunlight seems to scowl and shine askant. The gay crowd look at them as birds of evil omen, but respectfully make, as they pass, the only bows that do not call for a return. Yet at all hours they are to be seen, sometimes singly, standing like solitary crows in a cornfield before the entrance of some poverty-marked habitation; at others, in long and pompous files, stretching from before a church-door, draperied with the costly tokens of death, far down the neighboring street. In the first instance, a poor man has died, and the undertaker, for a few francs only, undertakes to give only a few francs' worth of conventional respect to the mortal remains he unceremoniously hurries to its cheap grave. Not so in the second instance. A rich man may not have died, but the deceased has left enough to pay for the pompous funeral, which law and custom force the family to accept from

the sole company that has the monopoly of interment for the city of Paris. It is rightly called the service-general of the "*Pompes Funèbres*." It pays largely for its privilege, and enjoys in return the right to make dying a very expensive affair in Paris. The corpse belongs, not to friends, but to this company, until the worms claim their prerogative. With us, a funeral is a simple, inexpensive affair, left, as all other individual matters very properly are, to the dictates of the judgment or affection of those who are most interested.

Not so here. A funeral, like every other ceremony, domestic or public, in France, must be converted into a spectacle. A dismal spectacle they make of it. Their black is an intensified black, and their cross and skull bones of the most appalling patterns and colors. All that can make a funeral chilling and hollow is liberally provided. If to the present mercenary tokens of grief they would add the Polynesian custom of paid wailing and forced rivulets of tears, the spectacle would be more perfect of its kind.

I may be considered as too severe on the system of funerals, but I have before me an official tariff of charges which shall be my evidence. Although nearly as large as one page of a penny newspaper, it embraces only the items for the third class of interments, that most commonly in vogue. In all, there are seven classes, the last and most expensive of which requires an outlay of not less than ten thousand francs for the journey from the church to the cemetery.

This tariff is in the shape of a printed bill, with the price affixed to each article or person required, with blank spaces for the sums total.

The department of religious ceremonies is divided into thirty-one distinct charges, embracing a total of two hundred and eighty-one francs for the Church. The first item is the "*Droit curial*," six francs; the presence of the curé costs twelve

francs ; vicars, three francs, and priests, two francs and a quarter each ; the “serpents,” clerks, chanters, and red-capped boys are cheaper. Then come all the minor employés of the Church—beadles, *Suisses*, carriers of the cross, &c. : these receive a franc and a half each. A deacon and sub-deacon, twelve francs ; a grand mass is cheap at three francs, but the extras swell it to a sum total in which the original charge is quite lost ; a gift to the altar, twelve francs ; two priests to go with the corpse to the cemetery, sixteen francs ; candles, ninety-six francs ; ornaments, censers, etc., at the altar and steps, including carpets and cross, holy water and candlesticks, forty-two francs ; tolling the bells, five francs. This is for an ordinary funeral. It will be seen that the Church thrives, and drives a good bargain with the dead.

Next we come to the lion’s share, or the company’s. This complete amounts to one thousand two hundred and thirty-four francs, divided as follows : Expenses to the dead-house, one hundred and fifteen francs ; to the Church, seven hundred and fifteen ; for the cortège, four hundred and four. Some of the items of these charges sound singularly enough in a bill. For instance, the black cloth over the entrance to the house pays ten sous the yard ; thirty mourning-chairs pay each one franc and a half ; a black foot-carpet, ten sous the yard ; eight men in mourning, eight francs each ; twelve torches, three francs each. The hearse, with the mourning for the horses, fringed with silver, plumes, etc., is charged at one hundred and twenty francs, and each black coach fifteen francs.

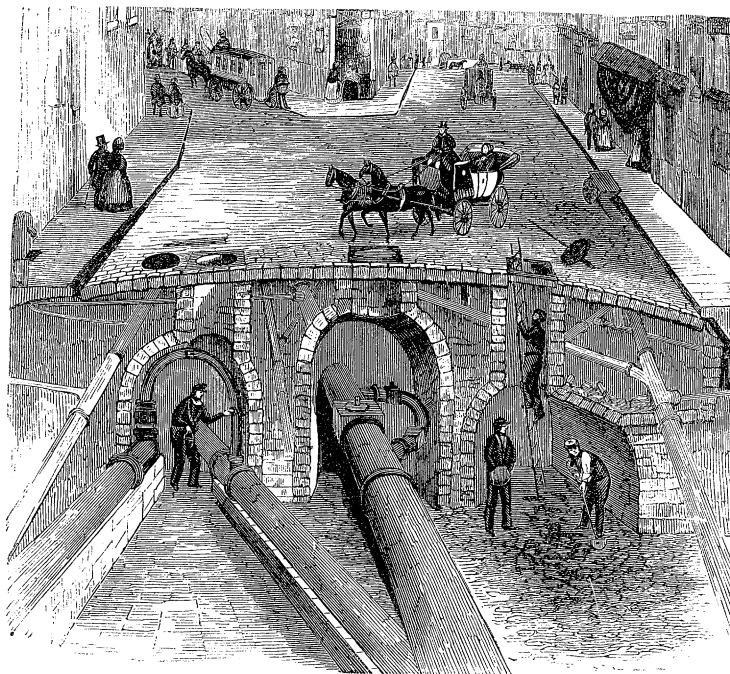
There are twenty-nine distinct charges at the dead-house, of from one franc to fifty, embracing candles, sepulchral lamps, and antique drapery, curtains, fringes, stand for the holy water, a portable altar, a cricket to kneel upon in velvet embroidered with silver, and a variety of other articles difficult to translate into Protestant English. Among the Church and

cortège charges are trophies of standards, candelabras, four allegorical statues representing Religion and the theological Virtues—these cost two hundred francs ; cockades, grand liveries, a war-horse, equerries for war-horse, dress for domestics, *a pair of weeping women in fine linen, ditto in fine crape, ditto in common*, escutcheons and ciphers in velvet and silver, crowns and bouquets of orange-flowers, cloth for the poor, and a long list of other articles to swell the expense and pageantry. These last, however, are supplementary, and at the option of the family.

It is cheaper to live than to die in Paris ; for, however dear may be the living to their friends, the dead are sure to be dearer, for a short period, at all events. For a stranger in a furnished apartment, the affair is still worse. The landlord claims the right to refurnish and refit the chamber at the expense of the deceased. In an instance that came to my knowledge of an American gentleman who died, leaving two young daughters, as it were, unprotected, the landlord brought in an exorbitant bill for new furniture, paper, and paint, and seized the corpse for payment as it was leaving the house for the cemetery. It is well, therefore, in a lease, to have the expense of dying agreed upon ; though, if it were not for the natural sentiment of respect to the dead, it would be a just retribution to leave in the hands of such a harpy a security which would not improve in keeping.

Paris above ground is an ever-changing panorama, which any one can view by paying for it ; sometimes the coin is simply money, or, cheaper and better yet, a little enterprise or exercise ; but too often it is a sight draught upon either health or morals. It is my endeavor to show it as it is, neither better nor worse, that those who visit it may go forewarned, while those who see it only through my telescope shall have cause to praise the clearness of its glasses. Few, however,

think of glancing at subterranean Paris—that mighty labyrinth of streets beneath ground, seen but rarely by human eyes, but without which Paris above ground would be an uninhabitable morass or a generator of pestilence. There is nothing here for show, but all for use. Built to endure for ages, and to subserve the necessities of millions of human beings, performing in the material economy of social life functions as important and as indispensable as the veins and arteries in physical life, they are worthy of a glance, at all events, that we may learn the labor and expense involved in lighting, watering, and cleaning a modern capital. These indispensable offices are



ABOVE AND BELOW GROUND.

all moving quietly on in their prescribed paths, unseen and almost unknown by the millions of noisy feet above them. Yet, should any derangement ensue, the health and comfort of the city is at once in jeopardy. Were the Tuileries consumed by fire, and the Arch of Triumph engulfed in an earthquake, the Parisians would simply have two fine monuments the less. But were the drains, water, and gas of Paris to be suddenly arrested, the city would become uninhabitable, and the ancient marshes of Lutèce would regain their lost empire. It was not, however, until the commencement of the last century that a regular system of drainage was established. Jean Beausire was the architect first charged with these useful works. The system has been continually improved upon, until it has rendered Paris the cleanest and best-lighted capital in the world. To free the Seine, within the city limits, from the rivers of filth that are being continually discharged into its stream, it is proposed to construct on each bank two mammoth drains, which shall receive the contents of all the minor ones, and, running parallel with the river, discharge their contents into it below the city. This would involve a prodigious outlay, but would contribute greatly to the comfort of the numerous bathing and washing establishments, and possibly might induce some Parisians to try the virtues of river water occasionally as a beverage.

Among the good things of Paris, there is none which appeals more kindly to the stranger than the regularity and dispatch of the postal arrangements. Sure-



THE POSTMAN.

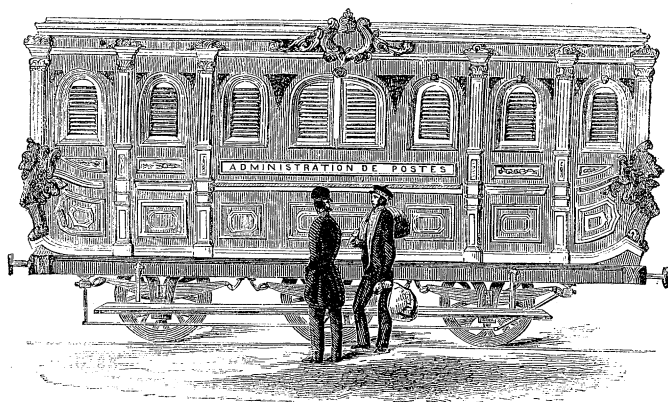
ly no one will grudge the trifling gift at New Year expected by the postman, who so faithfully and promptly has delivered your letters the past twelve months, seeking you out perhaps in the remotest quarter of the city. He is a man of uniform, and tinged with a slight air of importance; always on the move, and always with a smile to spare if he be able to respond to your eager expectations.

Another convenience, and an ornamental one, recently adopted, are the pretty cast-iron boxes, in the shape of col-



LETTER-BOX.

umns, placed about the city to receive the contributions for the general post-office. Their contents are emptied several times a day by the postal agents. But where the French post-office is unequaled, perhaps, by any other, is in the elegance and convenience of its ambulatory arrangements. The moving post-office is an elegant car attached to the express trains, in which the postal service goes on as quietly and as uninterruptedly, while traveling at the rate of forty miles an hour, as if stationary in the Rue Jean Jacques Rousseau. The mails are made up, letters received, weighed, stamped, and dispatched *en route*. The two following cuts best illustrate this admirable economy of time and distance.



POST-CAR.

The beautiful and the disgusting, the natural and the exaggerated, the true and the false, the useful and the showy, are so intermingled in Paris, that it often takes but a step to precipitate one from one extreme to the other. Yet it is this mixture, in which every art or passion finds an appropriate place, that gives this capital its unrivaled attractions. Every taste can be gratified, and every humor amused. Lessons



INTERIOR OF POST-CAR.

of wisdom or texts for many a useful discourse are developed in rapid succession. Neither to a reflective or thoughtless mind need there be any approach to ennui. The very stones and shop windows protest against it, while in the varying multitude there is a novelty for every minute. The art is to catch and apply the wit or moral as it floats rapidly past. To classify or arrange would be an impossible task, or, if possible, it would make the picture as rigid and uninviting as one of Cimabue's Holy Families. Better by far catch the manners as they rise, for one day's experience is no sure guide for its successor. If I glance hastily from one topic to another, blame not me, reader mine, but the variety that knows no end in the streets of Paris. I long ago thought I had exhausted the humorous fancies of the retail wine-dealers in their shops, from broad silver counters, to be measured by the square *mètre*, with walls presenting an unbroken line of mirrors, and ceilings sumptuous in gold and fresco, down to the meanest of the red-

republican dram-shops, whose customers find a tonic in dirt and tobacco-smoke; but one morning I stumbled upon one, the walls of which were lined with rows of various sized kegs and casks, the heads of each of which were *looking-glasses*. By this fancy the customer was sure to see in advance the image of himself in the cask which perchance was destined to engulf him, soul and body. One of the strolling theatres of the lowest character, on a fête Sunday at St. Cloud, had for a sign large pictures on canvas, representing the Descent from the Cross and the Raising of Christ. What rendered this the more extraordinary was the fact that, in general, their external attractions are very fair representations of the species of exhibition to be witnessed within.

Humbug has a veritable organization at Paris, with its directors, agents, tariff of prices, and machinery complete to elevate or depress an artist, author, or actor, as may be agreed upon with the parties interested. It even pervades the shops, the patronage of many of which is controlled by a species of advertising *claquery*, exceedingly diverting to the initiated, but expensive to the over-credulous. It is somewhat annoying, too, after having been plunged into ecstasies by the perusal of some much-talked-of and greatly-lauded literary work, christened with some famous name, to have a less verdant friend tell you that the only acquaintance the author in question has with it is the title-page and perhaps the preface, for affixing his name to which he pockets the price named in the contract as the equivalent of his reputation in the sale. But the greatest imposition upon the good-nature of the public, and upon their ears also, arises from the organized bands of *claqueurs* which invade every place of amusement, and levy formidable contributions upon directors, actors, and authors alike.

After one has been led by the contagious force of example to join in a round of uproarious applause, with which some fa-

favorite actor or piquant speech has been greeted, and, perhaps, been simple enough to add a bouquet to the pile cast at the feet of a pretty actress, whose emotions of gratitude, too powerful for speech, can only be expressed by a well-studied pantomime, it is as killing to sentiment as frost is to flowers to hear a cynical Frenchman by your side, with a latent smile at your verdancy discernible on his otherwise polite features, coolly remark, "That cost fifty francs." You turn to him and ask for an explanation. Monsieur is always pleased to enlighten strangers, even should the information convey no compliment to his own institutions. In the first place, he tells you never to take a



NIL ADMIRARI.

seat in the centre of the *parquette*, just under the chandelier. You wonder at this, as it is really the best place in the house to see the stage and audience, but, after the explanation, you avoid it as you would one of the plagues of Egypt. It is the locality of the "*claqueurs*." Remark that group immediately under the chandelier, some fifty persons: they are called "*Les*



LES CLaqueurs.

chevaliers du lustre." See how periodically they applaud—how well they are drilled; a hundred hands clapping in perfect unison. They are like soldiers, and have their corporals and captains, whose motions they follow with all the regularity that a flock of geese follows its leader. There stands the "chef," the Napoleon of claqueurs. He has his receptions, his court, and is a sort of Fate to the corps dramatique, who must fee him well if they would not be forgotten in the distribution of applause and "*encores.*" As it is reasonable to suppose, when a French audience has a mercenary band to execute

gratis for them all the clapping, stamping, and shouting, they do not trouble themselves much with such fatiguing ceremonies. If they are so far carried out of their dignified contempt for the claqueurs as to join in applause, it must be by something decidedly good in their estimation.

By this system of claquery—for such I call it, for want of a better word—almost every piece, however indifferent, is sure to have a career of fifteen or twenty representations. The chief marshals his forces to “*chauffer*”—warm up—the actors and the public. The degree of warmth he applies depends, of course, upon the price he receives. As the purse descends on one side of the scale, the applause rises in another. Bouquets, jewelry, and involuntary ecstasies, judiciously brought in from stage-boxes, are supplementary; but there are few, if any, actors or actresses independent of this species of clap-trap. The newspaper critics are as little to be depended upon for truth as the stunning homage of the claqueurs. I have not been able to learn where and how this system originated. At present it is in full force, and the only hope of its extinction is

in its increasing abuse. The “*chef de claque*” realizes not only power, but a tolerable fortune, in a few years from this black-mail. He not only guarantees the success or damning of a piece—for which also he has his instruments—but he contracts with directors for the night’s receipts, paying perhaps fifteen hundred francs, and receiving two thousand, if he be successful in his manœuvres. Decided-



À BAS.

ly, one should either know much or know nothing to enjoy any thing at Paris. A half-way initiation, alternating between faith and skepticism, is of all moods the most miserable.

The doors of the theatres are beset by another species of agents, scarcely less annoying in their degree. If you arrive a little late, you are assailed by venders of billets at less than the regular rates. They arrest your progress at each step, and



THE DOOR OF THE THEATRE.

with an eloquence and impudence that would do credit to a New York hackman, endeavor to force their tickets into your hands. Should you leave the house before the entertainment

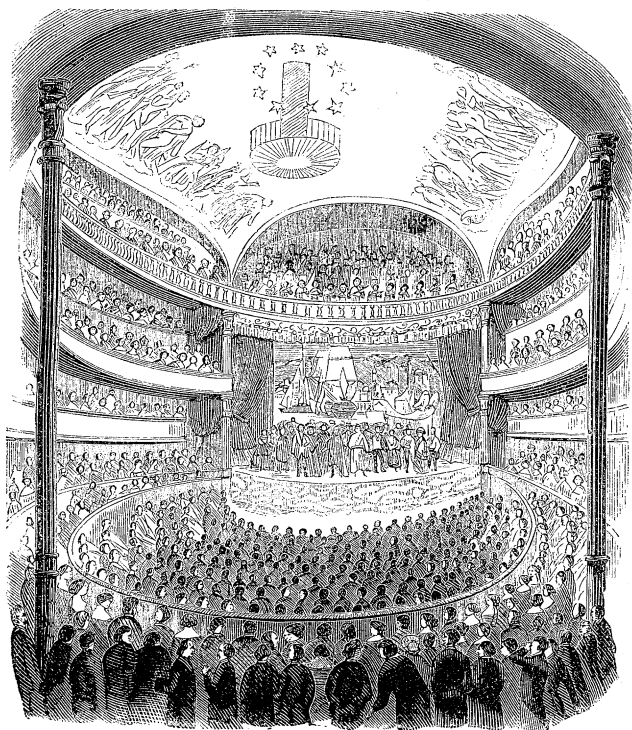
is over, your path is even more perilous. "Will Monsieur sell his check?" is shouted, in every key, by a dirty gang, from whose clutches one gladly escapes by throwing at them the object of their pursuit. If, however, he be more tenacious, he can realize a trifling portion of the original price of his billet—a practice quite common with Frenchmen who do not stay out the afterpieces.

The pursuit of knowledge under difficulties is a trite adage; but few take notice of the difficulties attending some kinds of pleasure. I never realized this more forcibly than the other evening at the Théâtre Française, on one of Rachel's nights. Ascending the staircase, I noticed a crowd of ladies and gentlemen, attracted by some manœuvre which greatly interested them. Joining the group, I became an equally interested spectator at once. Before them was a lady, richly dressed, of the circumference, moderately speaking, of a wine-pipe—in short, square, huge, fleshy, and clumsy; a figure much as would appear two of Rubens's Flemish divinities if run into one body. There was a step of about six inches' elevation for her to surmount to enter her box. This she was utterly unable to do, unassisted. The door was little less than a pattern. However, she had come to see Rachel, and was not disposed to give it up. The gentleman attending her, not particularly slight himself, backed into the box, and took hold of each of her hands. A stout female servant placed herself on all-fours underneath the most accessible part of the stout dame, and gradually lifted her, by rising on her hands and feet, as a sort of lever, as the gentleman pulled. For a little while it was uncertain whether the lady would succeed in passing through the door, or fall back and exterminate the panting servant beneath her; but her flesh being pliant, and the woman strong, with a final pull and bout all together, she at last passed in. A more ridiculous sight no comedy could have afforded; yet

French politeness was proof against a change of countenance during the operation beyond a slight expression of amazement at the novelty of the hoisting arrangement. An English crowd would have laughed and cheered.

With all the rage for amusements that pervades the French metropolis, the theatrical enterprise is a very uncertain one. Without the aid of government, the large theatres and operas could not subsist on their present scale of magnificence. Few of the minor ones pay. The most successful is the *Funambules*, which owes its popularity to the prince of low fun, Pierrot, who is to France what Pulcinello is to Italy. The *Vaudeville*, which cost 3,467,000 francs, was sold in 1832 for 1,100,000 francs; yet its gains the past winter from one play, *La Dame des Camelias*, alone were 100,000 francs.

M. Barthélemy, a young man of science and fortune, has constructed, at his own expense, an immense theatre on an altogether new model. His object is to moralize the masses by combining instruction with amusement, particularly in bringing upon the stage historical pieces. As yet his success is uncertain, as the hall has been used only for concerts. It holds about thirty-five hundred persons, and is a vast semi-elliptic of a cupola, with three rows of boxes, and galleries of a novel and daring architecture. It is so constructed for music that smaller orchestras and less powerful singers produce better effects than those of other theatres, the sounds not being lost in the hot air above, as elsewhere. The orchestra is placed *above* the stage, so that the attention of the public is not distracted from the stage by the movements of the musicians and their huge instruments. There are no foot-lights, but the hall is brilliantly illuminated by an ingenious light made to imitate the rays of the sun, and so suspended that it does not inconvenience the eyes of the spectators. The aim of M. Barthélemy in reforming the stage, both in a moral and architectural



NEW THEATRE.

view, deserves the countenance of the government. Better still were they to close to the public their school of depravation of manners, and petrifying of the kindly sympathies of the heart. The daily exhibition at the Morgue of the naked corpses of the criminal dead, or victims of despair, attracts a constantly changing crowd of young and old of both sexes, who, with cold curiosity, examine the lifeless bodies, exciting in each other laughter by emulous jokes, and even obscene remarks. Perhaps a mother, with grief too deep for utterance, recog-

nizes on the cold marble the graceful form of a daughter, who, with a smile of temporary farewell on her lips, left her but a few hours before. A mortal accident has overtaken her, and she now lies there dead, and stripped to the very verge of indecency. The spectators acknowledge no relationship with either the mourned or the mourner. "Ah! how unfortunate so handsome a girl should drown herself!" exclaims one. "What a beautiful carcass she makes!" says another, still more rudely. The children press between the adults to see the sight, listen to the comments of their elders, and then retire, having taken their first lesson in the school of inhumanity.

Unfortunately, human nature is more susceptible to evil than to good impressions, otherwise the pernicious influences of the Morgue might be more than counteracted by the daily exhibition of a charity whose zeal and purity admit of no earthly alloy. None can question the claim of the Sisters of Charity to these qualities, when it is remembered that theirs alone, of all the institutions of the Catholic Church, went through the Revolution of 1789, not only unmolested, but sustained and respected. In every age since their institution, and among all nations that they have visited, they have proved themselves angels of mercy. They have nursed the sick, comforted the afflicted, dispensed to the needy of every rank or nation, not only the gifts of charity, but performed by the bedside of loathsome pestilence or repulsive poverty those last offices from which relationship fled appalled, and which none but woman, who borrows her inspiration from those of her sex who were last at the cross and first at the grave can perform. As they were generations since, so are they now, the same devoted soldiers of humanity, whether amid Canadian snows or tropical heats; constant at the bedside of disease and death, carrying help and hope across the threshold of poverty, comforting and taming maniac violence or criminal de-



SISTER OF CHARITY.

sire by that principle whose soft answers and heavenly deeds turn away wrath, and bring alike all human passion submissive and hopeful at the feet of a Savior. French wit, philosophy, skepticism, and revolutions have equally respected the Sisters of Charity. Infidels and atheists, Republicans and Imperialists, enemies and friends of Rome, have each, in turn, acknowledged their services to humanity, as they, in turn, have been ministered to by them. Their rule is that of universal broth-

erhood, their sacrifice the entire renunciation of the world, and their faith is that active charity which is the bond of peace and good-will among men. True it is that among Protestants there are many sisters whose charity and faith equal theirs, and whose good works, done in secret, are not known from the right hand to the left. Theirs is the unorganized charity of the heart—the spontaneous offering of individual piety. But while distinctions and organizations exist among mankind, the humble garb of the Sisters of Charity, as they pass silently and quietly through the streets of Paris on their errands of mercy, will serve to remind both the Protestant and Catholic that the religion that visits and comforts the widow and fatherless still exists in the world. It would be well for their souls were they to go and do likewise.

Let not Protestants suppose that the old, disappointed, or afflicted—those only to whom the world offers but little—are to be found in their ranks. On the contrary, the young, comely, and accomplished have their representatives. Theirs is not either an oath of seclusion or of perpetuity. On the contrary, they see daily the outer world in all its brightness and attractions. They mingle in its throngs, and they pass from their plain cells or the bedsides of squalor and disease to the homes of affluence. The contrast between a life of worldly enjoyment and self-renunciation is constantly before them. Moreover, they are free at any time to leave the sisterhood and join again the circles they have forsaken. Under these circumstances, can there exist a doubt of their sincerity and purity? Parisian levity, which spares nothing else, sacred or profane, spares them. They never have to blush at false charges and insinuated scandal. The Popes have endeavored to introduce them into Italy, there being no counterpart among the Italian orders to theirs. As yet, Italian women have failed to imitate their purity and devotion. A few French sisters have been

induced to establish themselves at Naples, where their good works are no less acknowledged and appreciated than at Paris. I shall never forget the impression made upon me in conversing with a still young and fair sister in the sacristy of the chapel to the Hospital of the Insane at Avignon. She had taken us there to show us a wonderful object of art, in the form of a dead Christ upon the cross, cut out of a single piece of ivory, exhibiting on one side of the face an expression of agony, and on the other calm resignation. She spoke of her own situation with an accent of sorrowful satisfaction—sorrow that there was so much wretchedness, and satisfaction that she could labor for its consolation. She was free to go back to her friends, yet she preferred to live there, as she had already for thirteen years, performing the most menial offices for the insane. “The work is hard and constant,” said she, “because there are but few of us to perform it for more than one hundred patients, yet we shall continue to do it while we live.” As we dropped some pieces of money into the cup placed to receive them, she quietly remarked, “You know this is not for us, but for the poor insane whom we nurse; it all goes to them.” There was an air of calm piety and unobtrusive meekness, combined with grace and intelligence, about her, that made me feel that such a nurse at a sick bedside would prove at once a physician for the body and a missionary to the soul. In requesting a glass of water, her hospitality insisted upon our making use of the communion wine, apologizing for its not being of better quality. I took leave of her with increased respect for the order to which she belonged, and regret that the Church of Rome was not as purely represented in all its institutions and ministers; not without, I may as well confess it, a twinge of compunction at the unfruitfulness of my own life in good works and self-renunciation as compared with hers.

To write of the condition of a people, and omit to give their numbers, wealth, poverty, and the figures that show plainer than the most lively description their virtues and their vices, would be like painting a landscape without a ground-work, or trying to set up a human figure without the frame-work of bones. America has had the equivocal compliment to lend her name in Europe to more than one species of dissipation or crime, indicating thus the source from which it has been borrowed. Any species of robbery requiring peculiar *finesse* is called "*un vol à l'Américaine*;" and there is a gambling game—shades of our Pilgrim fathers, close your ears!—known in Europe simply as "Boston." It is to be devoutly hoped that no such accomplishment derived its origin from that city of "steady habits."

The most quiet and unsuspecting of robberies is that performed by means of false hands, the operation of which the adjoining cut shows better than can be described in words. The English have the reputation of being the most adroit in this species of theft, for the exercise of which omnibuses afford a very convenient field.

The refuse population of Paris, either



PICKPOCKET.

too poor to be reputed honest, or too criminal to have any pretensions to such a reputation, is estimated by M. Frégier at 63,000; but it is unnecessary to suppose that all these are actively engaged in evil doing. The average number of the imprisoned for all causes in France at one time is about 50,000, and during the year, 200,000. The expense of their detention is 20,000,000 francs, a legal tax which crime levies annually upon society, independent of the indirect contributions, in the shape of thefts and robberies, the amount of which there is no means of estimating. Great as this may be, it falls far short of the contributions exacted by mendicity and poverty. The French are not, as the Italians, a race of beggars. With the latter it is a profession, but with the former simply a necessity. There is too much fiery self-respect and genuine politeness in Gallic nature to produce a race of mendicants. Besides, the government discountenances it by severe measures so effect-



THE POLICE AND MENDICANTS.

ually that a stranger who glances superficially at Paris may doubt, as did Sir Francis Head, if there are any wretchedly poor. They are effectually concealed in stone mansions and narrow streets, the external appearance of which, however much it may

contrast with the brilliant Boulevards, but indifferently gauges the depths of misery within them. Besides, the mendicency, which is able occasionally, in despite of the police, to show its head in some of its Protean shapes, is of that reckless, swindling character, which either amuses by its cunning or chills by its impudence. In 1656, so great was this evil, that it was forbidden, under the penalty of a heavy fine, to give to beggars in the street under any pretext whatsoever, or to receive them into lodging-houses. The official number of "mendicants" in France is 4,000,000, or one in nine of the entire population. As many more are supposed to require more or less assistance from charity each year. If the destitution of France among its poorer classes assumes a magnitude that to the citizens of the United States would seem of gigantic proportions, public and private charity swells in a corresponding ratio. There is nothing in which France appears to better advantage than the scale on which she organizes her benevolence. It bespeaks a sensitiveness to the sufferings of humanity which does her high honor, and shows that in the Christian rule of good works she has made rapid progress, whatever she may lack in sound faith. The gifts and legacies to the hospitals and benevolent institutions from 1800 to 1846 have amounted to upward of 122,000,000 francs, increasing largely in the later years. This is exclusive of other charities, which are estimated at as much more, making a total of 45,000,000 of dollars. The official budget of charity for 1844 appropriates 25,000,000 of dollars for this object; but this includes the regular revenues of the hospitals, which amount to nearly two thirds of that sum. The property belonging to the 1388 hospitals of France is valued at 100,000,000 of dollars, producing a net income of about 2,500,000 dollars, and the number of sick received annually not far from 500,000. The inhabitants of the large towns absorb nearly all the revenues of the hos-

pitals, the thirty millions of the peasantry being left almost destitute. The hospitals in the cities are so liberally provided for that it has been seriously questioned whether they did not augment public distress by diminishing private responsibility. M. Moreau Christophe, after stating the enormous amount which it annually costs to support beggary, makes the very significant inquiry whether a less sum, wisely expended, would not suffice to extinguish it entirely.

These expenditures, heavy as they are and must be, when we are informed that, in 1836, of the deaths in Paris, more than two fifths took place in the hospitals, give but a faint idea of the extent of the benevolence of the French nation. There are in Paris alone more than one hundred and eighty private charitable societies and institutions. But, in spite of all this array of charity, there is a fearful amount of suffering and destitution in Paris. The public statistics show that the number who die annually from sheer starvation is by no means too inconsiderable to be overlooked in the bills of mortality.

While speaking of the charitable institutions of France, we must not omit to mention one, the utility of which is more than questionable, although there can be no doubt as to the benevolent motives in which it had its origin. We refer to the Foundling Hospital. Any parent to whom the birth of a child is a shame, or its maintenance an inconvenience, has but to repair to the gate of the hospital, deposit the infant in a "*tour*," or box turning upon a pivot, ring a bell which summons a porter, and the care for the life of the young being, which nature has so strictly devolved upon those who gave it birth, is at once and forever thrown upon strangers. The strongest argument urged in favor of this institution is, that the lives of many children are preserved who would otherwise have been murdered before or directly after birth. But when we take into account the fearful mortality of the infants thus given into

the charge of hired nurses, there is good reason to apprehend that the institution occasions a greater loss of life than it saves. I have not at hand the hospital statistics of the last few years ; but, according to those of the latest year within our present reach, out of 28,942 births, 4792 were abandoned by their parents and sent to the hospital. Any institution which enables and induces the parents of one sixth of the children born in the capital of a Christian country, with perfect impunity and without fear of detection, to abandon their offspring almost immediately after birth, must be productive of far more evil than it prevents. The great law of nature, that the mother shall have charge of her infant, can not thus be set aside with impunity ; nor, I apprehend, is the facility with which infants may thus be disposed of without a very important bearing upon the vast proportion which the illegitimate births in Paris bear to the legitimate. In the same year of which we have spoken above, one third of the births were of the former character.

CHAPTER X.

THE GENERATIONS OF FASHION.

IF there be one earthly object more deserving of pity than another, what do you think it is, curious reader? As a Yankee, with all your inherited cuteness, you will never guess. I leave that to a Frenchman; and, not to keep you longer in suspense—the worst possible policy for an author—I will tell you. It is an “*old fashion*.” How many delicately-chiseled noses are turned up at that irrevocable sentence of condemnation, while disgust at the sight, and amazement at the audacity of the shop-keeper, play about the lines of the fairest mouths as their lovely possessors turn their backs peremptorily upon an article which but a month before was the coveted object of all eyes—“a perfect beauty”—“a sweet love”—with an exclamatory “Pooh! it is old-fashioned.” To use an expressive, though vulgar phrase, that is a “clincher.” The fate of an old pot is not more hopeless. When once that Mede and Persian fiat has gone forth from feminine lips, every body is at liberty to give it another crack. A shop-keeper might as profitably employ his time in searching for the philosopher’s stone, as his eloquence in endeavoring to sell any thing once put under the ban of fashion. The interdict of beauty is upon it. Accursed of good taste has it become, and excommunicated from the depths of every well-filled purse. No matter how becoming it has been considered a few short weeks before, whatever may be its intrinsic merits of elegance, art, or costliness; however much human brains and hands

have labored to make it a combination of utility and beauty, it is now a sunken, degraded thing, despised of women and scorned of men, barely tolerated by the necessities of poverty, or reduced to seek a home in the haunts of vice.

This caprice, which looks only to change for its aliment, is as old as human invention. I make no doubt that Eve never wore twice the same pattern of fig-leaves, while Adam searched diligently the forests through to diversify the colors of his vegetable breeches. The Polynesian turns to nature for his book of fashions, and seeks to rival the hues of the bird of Paradise in the ample folds of his brilliant-colored "tappas." Every savage finds his greatest wants in the bright gewgaws of civilization. If there be a nation on earth that clings to its old clothes and furniture because they are good and useful; that deprecates change as innovation upon good habits and customs; that does not dive into the bowels of the earth, fish the seas, and penetrate the heavens, racking nature to find material wherewith to distort and crucify nature in form, stuff, and pattern, out of sheer disgust of the old and capricious love for the new, I have yet to discover it.

A passion so universal must be productive of more good than evil, or else it would die of neglect. At first glance, nothing appears more unreasonable, and more destructive of excellence, than this devotion to variety. The "love" of one season is the "fright" of the next. No sooner have we reconciled our eyes and shoulders to one fit, and begun to think it tolerable, than we abandon it for some fresh abomination of the tailor or modiste, and recommence our penance of new-formed inexpressibles and new-cut whalebone. Every change of coat or boot is another martyrdom. The rack has indeed left the halls of justice, but it has taken up its residence on the counters of St. Crispin and kindred saints. Human flesh has become a mere machine—a sort of clay model—for the





masters and mistresses of the shears and needles to fit their garments upon. Bone and muscle are secondary in their system; the primary object is to display their "fashions," which, as they are mainly, of late, of the grotesque order, we may class, according to the views of Ruskin's architecture, rather as the *labor* of little minds than the *repose* of great.

So in other things. We no sooner combine utility and beauty, forming an article which is truly excellent in itself, than we abandon it, and content ourselves with some crude novelty, to be discarded, in its turn, as soon as it has advanced through its several degrees of fashion to any thing like comfortable excellence. An individual who ventures to like what suits him well, in opposition to the novel and fashionable, becomes a pariah at once. He is abandoned of society—lucky if known as nothing worse than an "odd, old-fashioned fellow," and of no more account in creation than a dead leaf. In usual they are doomed to equal consideration with an old hat, substituting a stale joke for the decided kick, either of which is an effectual barrier to the firmament of fashion.

If this love of variety had no other recommendation than to prevent repletion in the purses of the rich, it would still be a social blessing. It feeds, clothes, and houses half the world. It feels the way to artistic perfection, opens the doors to ingenuity, favors invention, and prevents mental stagnation. Costly and annoying to the individual it may be, but to the nation it is beneficial. The very whims of beauty are so much bounty to industry and art. Mere dandyism is the rust of civilization. Like corroded steel, it shows the most where the polish is most brilliant.

Paris is the central star of fashion. Whatever is seen elsewhere is a ray from her light, diminishing in lustre as it recedes from that city. The French, under Napoleon, by force of arms sought to win a universal empire. Failing in this,

they have since employed the more subtle weapons of taste and fashion to attain the same end. Their conquests extend with a rapidity that far surpasses the warlike exploits of the "Grand Empereur." There is not a race on the globe that does not seem destined to lose its national costumes and habits before the invincible power of French fashions. They have penetrated the huts of the South Sea savages. They march with the rapidity of commerce along the steppes of Central Asia, and have climbed the Chinese wall. The turban of the descendants of the Prophet rolls in the dust before the hat of the infidel. This infiltration of Parisian fashions is seen every where; sometimes with an elegance that rivals Paris itself, but more often with an awkward imitation destructive of every grace of the original. It threatens to subjugate every European costume, however venerable from antiquity or picturesque in effect. The traveler must hasten if he would see what remains of the beautiful or odd in the dresses of the Italian, the national costumes of the Swiss, the furred robes of the Pole, and the medley mediæval civilization of the Asiatic and European tribes that now are ruled by the Autocrat of all the Russias. The conquests of the *modistes* are wider than those of the marshals.

A French army of "artistes" have insinuated themselves, as worms into old books and furniture, into every cranny of past civilization. They are rapidly undermining every habit, both of the body and for the body, of the past. At present the adulterine mixture is becoming to neither condition; but before the army of French cooks, dancing-masters, tailors, modistes, coiffeurs, valets, femmes-de-chambre, and mechanics of knick-knackery, every other knick-knackery and fashion, not absolutely Parisian in its origin and education, is rapidly giving way. Whether this is an incipient stage of the Millennium or not, when mankind are to be all brethren,

alike in speech, habits, and rule, remains to be seen. This much we know, that French millinery is the dominant power of civilization. England's Queen and Russia's Czar alike acknowledge its supremacy. Parisian fashion, which, like others, once had a local character of its own, has now become a cosmopolite, making itself equally at home in Timbuctoo as in the Champs Elysées.

Whether the world will gain in picturesque effect by the obliteration of national costumes may well be doubted; but whether French taste has not a wide gulf yet to pass before it can make any thing graceful and comfortable of the stove-pipe hat, dismal colors, and swaddling clothes to which it dooms its male devotees, is no matter of doubt at all. It is in the infancy of its empire, and has yet much to learn before mankind will acknowledge its sway an easy one. The most that can now be said in its favor is that, in its restlessness, it may by chance hit upon some combination which shall reconcile comfort and beauty. But we very much fear, if it succeeded in this, that it would not allow it to live a month.

One secret of Parisian success in the empire of fashion is this. In the past it cunningly borrowed of all nations every peculiarity that could be turned to account in its own rage for novelty. The Romans admitted the deities of conquered nations into their mythology without scrutiny. Their great scheme of government comprehended every worship, provided it was not purer than their own. Parisians borrowed every hue and cut from rival costumes, and transformed them to their own tastes and purposes. Receiving every thing in the beginning, they have ended by giving every thing; and the whole world now looks to Paris as the arbitress of fashion, as the Jew does to Jerusalem, and the Romanist to Rome, for the seat of their religions.

With all this, however, the French once had fashions pe-

culiarly their own. Indeed, their empire is of very recent date, and it is well worth our trouble to go back a little, and see by what strange metamorphoses French taste has assumed its present shape. To do this, I shall be compelled to illustrate freely, for two reasons. I detest the technicalities of dress, and if I employed the terms in description, I could neither understand the costumes myself or make them intelligible to my readers; therefore I shall adopt the better method of letting them see for themselves.

After gunpowder had put an end to metallic armor, the French nobles, by the usual force of contradiction, ran into the opposite extreme, and from iron by the pound on their necks, began to wear costly lace and ribbons by the yard. This in time subsided into the most elegant of court-dresses, though too effeminate in its character for any but aristocratic idlers. Such was the costume of the perfumed gallants who crowded the an-



COURT DRESS, 1775.

K

te-chambers of Pompadour and Du Barri. Intrigue was the business of their lives ; they looked, acted, studied, and, above all, dressed with the paramount view of captivating the fairer sex. Dressing, therefore, was a laborious and protracted operation, which demanded all the powers of the mind. It was well if the gallant who commenced it as soon as he rose from his couch at noon, finished his labor of love by three o'clock. The hands, withdrawn from the night-gloves, must be soaked for a long time in lotions and washes, to remove any discoloration or roughness ; the cheeks were to be tinted with carminatives to give a bloom to the complexion, pallid from last night's debauch ; every envious pimple must be hidden by a patch ; the clothes must be perfumed, the linen powdered to overcome the smell of soap. The proper tying of the cravat was the great labor of the day ; this performed, the wig and hat properly adjusted, the most captivating attitudes and graces carefully studied before the mirror, and the French noble of a few years before the Revolution was prepared for the conquests of the day. But, before this elaborate costume was finally swept away by the Revolution, there was a brief episode of simplicity. Franklin made his appearance at court in a suit of sober brown. All heads were turned. Lace, and embroidery, and powdered curls were discarded. Straight brown coats and straight cut hair became the mode of the moment.

The habit succeeding this was based upon the old English frock-coat, with its ample and awkward folds, which, by some unaccountable freak, became all at once the rage at Paris. The Duke de Lauroquais used to say that the English frock-coat gave a mortal wound to the costume of the French noblesse, which speedily degenerated, with its brocade and gay colors, into a disguise for the Carnival or a dress for a masquerade ball ; while the new costume, which was half adopted



THE FASHIONS FOR 1787.

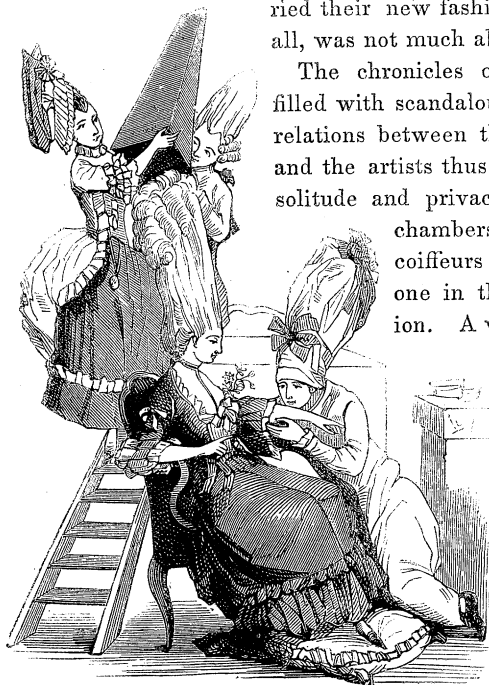
by the ladies, became in 1787 as we see it in the cut which we present above.

Black, which heretofore had been the obscure color confined

to lawyers, authors, and all those who then formed the connecting link between the vulgar and the fashionable world, now suddenly took a start, and became the "ne plus ultra" of gentility. The pre-eminence then attained by it for gentlemen has been retained to this day, while colors are banished to the street or masquerades. At this time, too, that abomination of abominations for the covering of the head, known as the modern hat, began to assume its present hideous shape, for which the transformer deserves the pains of decapitation. Expensive lace became the passion of the dandies, who piqued themselves upon having a different variety for each season.

It was the fashion, also, for gentlemen to wear much costly jewelry, as another mode of distinguishing themselves from the plebeian crowd. In 1780 was introduced the singularity of wearing two watches at once, burdened with immense chains. This was also adopted by the ladies. The custom now appears ridiculous, but, in reality, it is no more so than the present one of loading a vest with a huge bundle of non-descript jewelry—coral and bone arms, legs, and death's-heads—under the name of charms. The Marshal Richelieu was one of the first to carry two watches. One day a caller, by some mischance, threw them both on the floor. He began to overwhelm the Marshal with excuses. "Make yourself easy," replied the veteran of politeness, "I never saw them go so well together before."

The ladies, not to be outdone in extravagance by their lords, turned their attention to their hair, and invented the strangest coiffures. The Roman ladies, in their rage for red perukes, frequently sacrificed their own raven locks altogether, and accumulated several hundred of different shades in a short time. The passion of the French was for white. A caricature of 1778 gives an idea of the height to which they car-



CARICATURE, 1778.

ried their new fashion, which, after all, was not much above the truth.

The chronicles of the day are filled with scandalous stories of the relations between the grand dames and the artists thus admitted to the solitude and privacy of their bed-chambers. The art of the coiffeurs became a great one in the eyes of fashion. A work on the sub-

ject was published at eight dollars the volume. The professors became rich and distinguished. The handsome Leonard, who was the coiffeur of the queen, Maria Antoinette,

succeeded in using upward of fourteen yards of gauze upon a single head, which acquired for him a European renown.

The turbans and bonnets of this epoch were equally extravagant. The coiffures of the ladies became so high that the face seemed to be in the middle of their bodies; and the director of the Opera was compelled to make a rule that no lady with a head-dress above a certain height should be admitted into the amphitheatre, because the spectators were unable, on account of them, to see the stage. If the ladies are induced to class them as "frights," let them consider that, in *their* day,



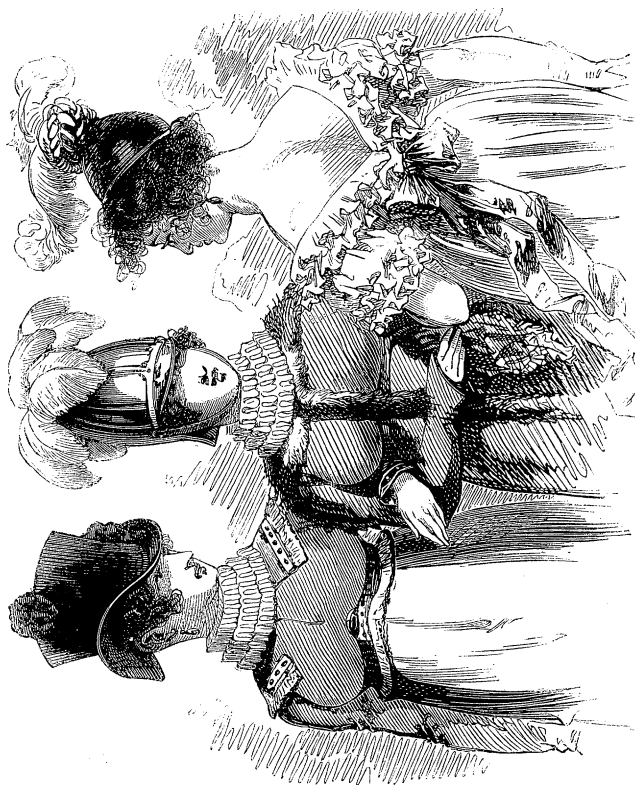
HEAD-DRESS, 1785.

they were considered equally as becoming as the present styles.

It was in vain that the caricaturists leveled their weapons at these towering head-dresses. "Top-knots" would not "come down." They waxed higher and higher, threatening to rival the tower of Babel, until the Queen was attacked by a violent illness, which occasioned the loss of the flaxen locks that had



called forth the genius of the coiffeurs. At once down went the towering piles, like castles in the clouds. Every lady at court appeared with a flat head. The next great change in ladies' gear was wrought by a philosopher and poet. St. Pierre put forth his *Paul et Virginie*, and all Paris went mad for simplicity and nature. He attired his heroine in simple white muslin, with a hat of plain straw. The volatile *Paris-*



HEAD-DRESSES, 1813.

iennes were captivated. Silks and satins, powder and pomatum, vanished as if by magic, and, from queen to waiting-maid, nobody appeared except in white muslins and straw hats.

Geography was ransacked to find names for these remarkable superstructures for the head. Thus there were bonnets *à la Turke*, *à l'Autriche*, and, even as early as 1785, America was honored in having one style, called *à la Philadelphie*; finally, the wits, or the geographical knowledge of the milli-

ners being exhausted, they christened their latest invention, in despair, the "anonymous bonnet."

Paris, in the year 1851, no sooner set eyes on the would-be American fashion of Bloomerism, with its short skirts and trowsered legs, than it completely extinguished it by one blast of its all-powerful ridicule. Yet, as long ago as 1772, it had adopted a mode, compounded from the Polonaise, equally as open to



BONNET, 1786.

objection, so far as scantiness of petticoats was concerned, with the addition of heels several inches in height, and walking-sticks which might easily be mistaken for boarding-pikes.

The extravagance and luxury of the fashionables of both sexes immediately preceding the Revolution, which was destined to engulf them and their fortunes, were such as almost to palliate the excesses of the people who had so long and patiently borne with the heartlessness and vices of the aristocracy. There was a rivalry among the great lords and bankers as to who should ruin themselves soonest for the favorite ac-
tresses of the day. Then courtesans rode in their carriages



BONNET, 1786.

made with panels of porcelain, silver spokes, drawn by six horses, and attended by mounted servants in livery. Even royalty was scandalized and outdone by the magnificence of their equipages, hotels, and houses of pleasure. The nobles, as if with a presentiment of their coming fate, hastened to



THE FASHIONS, 1787, '88.

pour into the laps of their mistresses their entire fortunes, seeking to drown in refined debauchery the thunder of the storm that already began to roll over their heads.

Among the follies which the fashions of this date presented was the confusion which arose between male and female attire. Men borrowed the laces, ruffles, belts, jewelry, and fine-

ry of the women. They, in revenge, took the coats, vests, open shirts, cravats, powdered queues, canes, and even cloth frock-coats of the men. The fashion of the male for one month was frequently adopted for the mode of the female for the next. Sexual proprieties in dress were utterly confounded, and this medley of apparel extended in some degree to habits and pursuits. The ladies seized upon the studies and occupations of men. Many of their conquests they have retained to this day, as any one conversant with Paris can perceive.

In the midst of this extravagance came the Revolution. The etiquette and magnificence of the old society disappeared in the vortex of the social whirlpool. Diamonds and lace, flowers and plumes, embroidered coats and satin robes, all the luxurious and costly creations of past fashion, sunk more rapidly than they arose. Fortunes were annihilated in a day. Royalty even put on plebeian shoes, mounted the coarse cap of the worker, and shouted the hollow cry of "*Egalité*!" Universal brotherhood was on the lips of men, and universal hate in their hearts. Religion and decency fled in affright. It was the advent of *sans-culottism*. For a while, coarseness and vulgarity, under the garbs of equality and fraternity, reigned triumphant. For a time they took the form of *Anglo-mania*. This was before the advent of the "classical" era. The clubbists carried enormous cudgels, wore thick shoes and coarse coats, and in all ways endeavored to transform themselves into blackguards, with the most complete success. The stones of the Bastille were made up into patriotic breast-pins for the bosoms of beauty. Copper buckles replaced the gold and silver of former years. Wealth and fashion, once so inordinately displayed, were now the sure tokens of destruction. Safety was only in abject humility and conspicuous poverty. But French nature, though it could endure the tyranny of political Jacobinism, was restless under the extinction of fashion and

obliteration of clean breeches. It soon rebelled ; discarding all past inventions, it struck out new and tenfold more ridiculous costumes than before. The fashion-plates of that time reveal this rebellion against *sans-culottism* in a thousand comical ways. A view of the rendezvous of the fashionable world, the garden of the famous "Palais Royal," as it existed in 1792, would better illustrate the "cut" of the day than pages of description. The different political parties displayed their mutual hatred, not so much in words, which they dared not utter, as in the silent but mocking eloquence of dress. The popular tri-colors and cut and unpowdered hair remained, however, in the ascendancy. But neither the horrors of the scaffold nor the brutalities of Jacobinism could long suppress the pretensions of the young elegants to dress as they pleased. Indeed, it became a species of heroism, by extravagant finery and outrageous taste, joined to a mincing, effeminate voice, to throw contempt upon the coarseness of their political opponents. The "*jeunesse dorée*" of this period were clerks, young lawyers, and others of equally humble origin, who, having aided in destroying the old aristocracy, now sought to excel them in vice and folly.

Each succeeding year gave origin to fashions, if possible, more absurd than the preceding. The moral chaos that prevailed in France affected all material things. Dress was not only more or less typical of politics, but illustrative of the classical theories of the times. The military scholar of the school of Mars, in 1793, wore a mongrel uniform, invented by the painter David, and intended to be partly Roman, partly Grecian, but which any old legendary or phalanx veteran of Cæsar or Alexander would have indignantly rejected as wholly French.

Upon the overthrow of Robespierre, fashion took for a time a strange turn. A year before, men went in red night-caps,



THE MODE, 1800.



THE MODE, 1812.

and magistrates wore wooden shoes. Now the citizens emulated the times of the Regency in the extravagance, if not in the elegance of their costumes. The most popular entertainments were the *bals à victime*. To be admitted to these, one must have lost a relative by the guillotine. The dancers wore crape about the arm, and gayly danced in honor of the deceased. It became the fashion to show the profoundest abhorrence of the Reign of Terror. Instead of Robespierre's *tappédurs*, "head-crackers," young *muscadines*, or dandies, in swallow-tailed coats, with their hair plaited at the temples and flowing behind in military fashion, made it a duty to knock down any shag-coated Jacobin they chanced to encounter. The ladies, too, expressed their horror of the bloody time in a fashion of their own. The Jacobins had made a virtue of destroying life; the production of life must be the grand virtue under the new state of things. Hence, in 1794, it was noticed that every fashionable *citoyenne* was either really or apparently far advanced in maternity.

The "*Merveilleuse*" of the same year, by the capacity of her bonnet and the slimness of her skirts, will recall a fashion which undoubtedly some of my readers thought "extremely elegant" in its day, but which would now be likely to consign its wearer to a mad hospital.

The male specimen of this species was scarcely less remarkable in his choice of attire; while the "*Agiteor*"—a political bully, a blackguard, on a par, in principles and practice, with some of his kindred who disgrace our republic—wore a costume which, like the stripes of a hyena, distinguished him at once from the more respectable citizen.

The attempt, under the auspices of David, to revive the classical toga, and to model the fashions for the ladies after the costumes of Aspasia and Agrippina, met with but transient success, owing to the severity of the climate, which was par-



THE "MERVEILLEUSE," 1793



"MERVEILLEUX," 1793.



"L'AGIOTEUR," 1795.

ticularly unfavorable to bare throats and legs, and transparent muslin. Besides, none but those whom nature had plenteously clothed with charms could with complacency thus dispense with dress. Coughs, rheumatisms, and ridicule soon extinguished all classical ardor among these few, tho' numbers of the fashionable women of the period were willing to sacrifice both modesty and health in their desire to carry back the civilization of the world two thousand years, when silk was worth its weight in gold, and cotton an unknown thing. While the fashion lasted, its want of adaptation to the climate gave rise to some

ludicrous scenes. Thus, at the famous "Feast of Pikes," when all Paris was gathered in the open air, a sudden storm of rain came down. The thin muslins with which the females had attired themselves, "like the women of the free



"CLASSICAL COSTUME," 1796

people of antiquity," were soaked through in a moment, and clung closely around their wearers, so that, as the dry chronicler remarks, "the shape was clearly discernible." "Titus" and "Alcibiades" would have been more than human to have refrained from laughing at the spectacle presented by the be-draggled "Clorinda" and "Aspasia." The *coup de grace* was given to the classical fashion by the appearance of a favorite actress in the character of a Chinese girl. Her costume would hardly have been recognized in Pekin; but, such as it

was, it struck the fancy of the town; and the Parisiennes loaded themselves with frills and ruffs, fancying that they were habited *à la Chinoise*.

The classical party were divided into Romans and Athenians, whose simplicity of attire gave rise to another sect in the world of fashion called "*Incroyables*." They protested against the invasion of antiquity by an opposite extreme in dress; so that, what between superfluity of coat collar, cravat, and hat, it was difficult to see that they had any head at all.

At this epoch, the confusion, or, more properly speaking, medley of fashions—in which every extreme and incongruity was represented—was at its height. Each taste and political sentiment wantoned in its own masquerade. The liberty of dressing as one pleased for once reigned triumphant. The Jacobins reveled in dirt and dishabille; the classical scholars in nude simplicity; the fops in perukes, powdered heads, three-cornered hats, and hair cut *à la Titus*; the ladies as simple country girls, with bonnets *à la butterfly*; robes *à la Cybèle*; chemises *à la Carthaginoise*; in short, *à la* any thing their caprices or ingenuity could devise. Each one strove after originality; and a more extraordinary crowd than that of the streets and salons of Paris under the Consulate the world will never again see. It was fashion run crazy. The world of "ton" were more like the inmates of a madhouse than the rulers of society. Madame Tallien—the beauty of the day—wore *transparent* costumes, in imitation of the Olympian gods. Her stockings were flesh-colored, and divided at the toes, on which she carried rings and jewels. Her friend Josephine—afterward Empress—was her rival in fashion. Feminine whims did not stop even at this degree of immodesty, but went to such lengths as I shall not undertake to describe. Suffice it to say that dresses "*à la sauvage*" became in



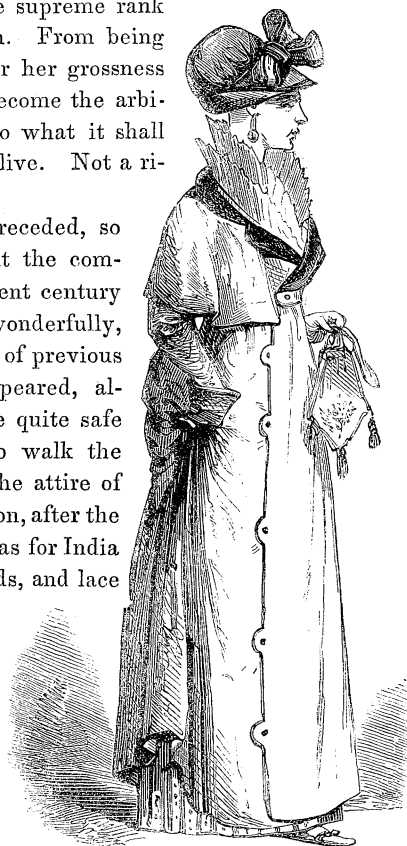
"INCROYABLE," 1796.

vogue, while the pictures and ornaments openly displayed would have scandalized even the Roman world, and been thought not quite "the thing" in Sodom

I shall run hastily over the intervening space between that

era and our own, depending mainly upon illustrations to show by what changes of cut and gradations in taste our present costumes have been formed, and how Paris—having for a while rioted in every species of extravagance that a depraved and licentious taste could conceive—has at last quietly and indisputably assumed the supreme rank in the world of fashion. From being the butt of mankind for her grossness of garments, she has become the arbiter of civilization as to what it shall wear and how it shall live. Not a rival disputes her sway

As the Revolution receded, so luxury augmented. At the commencement of the present century dress had simplified wonderfully, and the worst features of previous absurdities had disappeared, although it would not be quite safe for man or woman to walk the streets in our day in the attire of that. The grand passion, after the Egyptian expedition, was for India shawls, pearls, diamonds, and lace of the highest price. Men rived women in their desires for these luxuries. The debts of Josephine for her toilet in a short time amounted to one million two hundred thousand francs. She had



PROMENADE COSTUME, 1801.

ordered thirty-eight new bonnets in one month; the feathers alone cost eighteen hundred francs. With such an example, the court followed so rapidly in the path of extravagance, that even Napoleon was scandalized, although he had said to his wife, "Josephine, I wish that you shall astonish by the beauty and richness of your dress," following up the precept with action one day, when she was not clad with sufficient elegance to satisfy him, by throwing the contents of his ink-stand upon her costly robe. Josephine owned one hundred and fifty Cashmere shawls of remarkable beauty and great price. She offered Madame Murat fourteen thousand francs for one that pleased her.

Judging from the past, nothing admits of greater variety of form than the modern bonnet, while its rival—the male hat—is restricted to the slightest possible variation of its pipe shape. *Now*, the fashionable ladies wear their bonnets merely suspended from the back of their heads, like the outer leaf of an opening rose-bud. *Then*—in 1801



BONNET, 1801.

—they overhung the forehead, much after the manner of a candle-extinguisher.

In 1812, the modern hat had assumed the general shape



CRAVAT "À OREILLES DE LIEVRE," 1812.

which it has, unfortunately, ever since maintained, and with which it seems likely to make the tour of the globe. The ladies have at times made various assaults upon it, and even attempted to take possession of it themselves — a conquest which, luckily for the influence of their charms, they never wholly accomplished. He would be a benefactor to the human race who could invent a suitable covering for the head which should utterly annihilate the present source of discomfort and ugliness which surmounts the front of him made in the image of God

In 1828, the leg-of-mutton sleeve, which descended in its full

amplitude to the present generation, was in full vogue; also, the *low* necks and backs, which have ever retained their popularity, by a strange sort of anomaly, as *full* dress; while short petticoats—which are so convenient—have been lengthened into untidy skirts that save the street-cleaners half their trouble.

I have brought together, in one tableau, the four most remarkable types of dress that have swayed the fashionable world for the past century. The striking changes depicted therein are indicative of what we may look for in the future. With so plastic a many-colored material as dress, there can be no limits to the varieties of costume.



LEG-OF-MUTTON SLEEVE, 1823.

CHAPTER XI.

A PEEP INTO A MONSTER NURSERY, WITH A GLIMPSE AT THE NURSES.

I HAVE elsewhere spoken somewhat of the “principles” of the hospital for foundlings in Paris, which is a type of the numerous establishments of the same character to be seen throughout Roman Catholic Europe; but as yet I have not crossed their thresholds, to give my readers a “sight” within. To Protestant eyes they form so extraordinary a spectacle that it is worth our while to take a peep, if but to see how so monstrous a nursery is managed by its good parent, the state. Be not startled, nervous celibate; the whinings and cries from five thousand baby lungs shall not reach your ears, nor the “sights” of the necessities of half a myriad of “disgusting young ones” salute your eyes. Each one of the “precious little souls” shall be as clean and quiet as if slumbering sweetly in the arms of a doting mamma, so that your bachelor sensibilities need fear no sudden shock; and if you have any idea of matrimony still lingering about your—I will not say impenetrable heart, but susceptible head—do not be discouraged by the appearance of so many cradles, for under no circumstances need you provide for an “expected” family on so extensive a scale. Besides, matrimony had no more to do with the creation of most of these creatures than with the apples in your orchard. All that they can ever know about their previous origin is much of the same character as Topsey’s knowledge

of her infantile career. They never had any father or mother—"they grewed"—a term about as explicit as the Mosaic account of the creation of the firmament. Poor things! clothed alike, fed alike, nursed alike, taught alike, and spanked alike, they look more like the result of some mysterious invention, by which population, by scores, is turned out of a newly-patented machine, not yet fully perfected, for the benefit of the government, whose wants of human material could not brook the slow, natural mode of manufacture of immortal souls, and therefore offered a reward for the discovery of some more wholesale process.

At all events, the babies, without regard to any deficiency in their ancestral trees, are all gathered together here, as will be seen by looking into one of their sleeping apartments, where the results of the philanthropic care of the state, in acknowledging all bastards as its own, is palpably manifest. This national charity commenced in 1552, and has had its arms full, in increasing ratio, ever since. Indeed, the relation between parent and child, among a not over-scrupulous class of our brethren and sisters by Adam, as well as any faith in the old-fangled doctrine of matrimony, seems to be quite exploded. They beget, and, like some birds that we read of, drop their young, to take their chance, into the nearest nest, at the same time dropping all farther thought in the matter, until another accident induces a repetition of their infantile contribution to the state crib. This, to be sure, is better than strangling the unfortunates, though a goodly proportion soon after become strangled by the joint operation of the natural feebleness of an anonymous existence, and the hard rearing of mercenary nurses, to whom they are presented in the country, as a species of scape-goats for the sins of their foster-families in particular, and society in general. Those who escape this more fortunate fate are, sooner or later, choked by the miseries of

actual life, to which their introduction is about as good a preparation as a hot bath for a plunge into a March tide.

The poor infant, after being taken in at the hospital, either as picked up abandoned in the street, or more humanely pass-



THE "TOUR."

ed through the revolving box, called the "tour," which is so conveniently contrived "to receive and no questions asked," is as heartily welcomed and cared for as can in reason be expected by women doomed by their faith never to awaken within themselves the maternal instinct. With what mingled feelings of compassion and dread they must each day approach that cradle which never receives its baby-charge but once!

It always reminds

me of those nondescript monsters with which our faithful nurses were wont to tingle our juvenile ears with horror, and to cause our little hearts to beat too quickly for sleep through the long, long, first hours of night, at the climax,

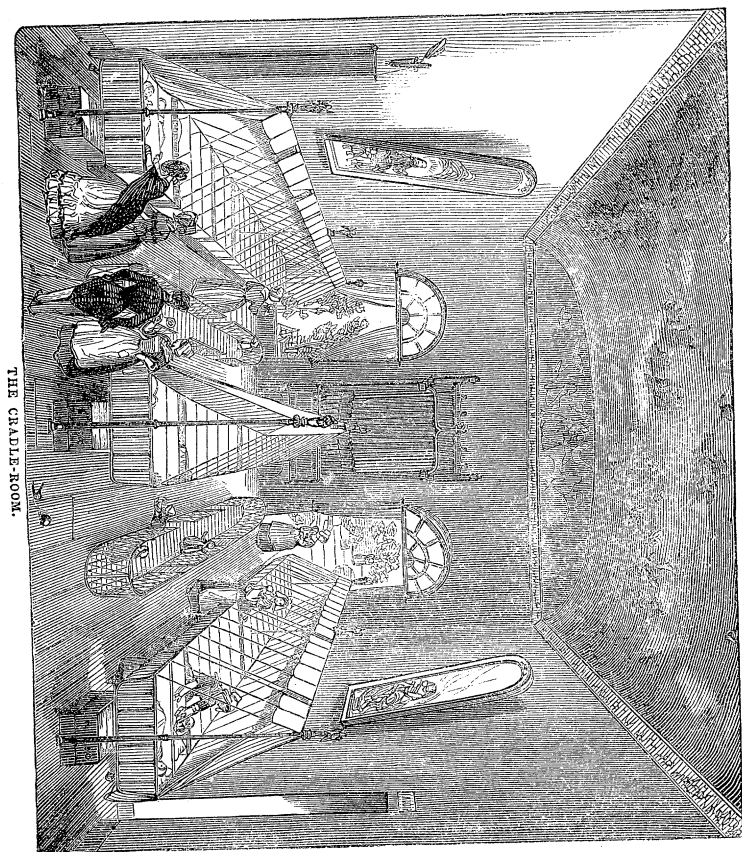
“how they swallowed children at one mouthful.” Then, too, there is in human nature an instinctive dislike to hear other people’s children cry—our own never do—and we have no patience with the little wretches, that should be strangled if “they won’t stop their noise.” I doubt if old-maid nature is much more charitable than old-bachelor nature in this respect. Added to this is the natural horror and vexation that fills the heart upon receiving hourly evidence that parents will deny their own offspring, and thus abuse the charity of the merciful.

Perhaps, too, there is some little curiosity to see what the next turn of the “tour” will turn out. Will the lottery that never gives a blank yield a prize? We all like “sweetly-dressed children,” “clean as a new rose,” and all that sort of thing, provided they chirrup and look happy, as if they knew their mammas, papas, and all their friends individually at six weeks old. The veriest old curmudgeon is flattered by such a recognition, and smiles because he can’t help it. What, then, must be the excitement among the poor nuns when such a babe turns up, with a whole wardrobe of fine linen, and some jewel by which it shall at some future time be identified! What curiosity to know whose it can be, with clothes upon its delicate limbs fine enough for the first-born of a duchess, and perhaps a mysterious note, saying that the infant is not a mere waif upon the shores of charity, but simply a loan of flesh and blood, to be called for in due time, with the accumulated interest of proper care and education! Will the poor sisters love this one more than the next, a snub-nosed, squalling, red-skinned twelve-pounder, scantily covered with a dirty rag, and showing animal fierceness and strong opposition in its first hours? I wot not. These sentiments are the secrets of individual hearts. Sufficient for us to know that all are received with equal tenderness, numbered, and, when put out to nurse, ticketed by a collar upon the neck, or

with rings in the ears sealed by the administration of the hospital. Wherever the child goes, it is stamped as illegitimate and the property of the hospital. This is not the most promising introduction to the world, though the necessity of some distinguishing token is obvious.

By a singular contradiction in French law, after providing every facility for the abandonment of these infants, it punishes those who are guilty of this crime by imprisonment. Even fifteen years at hard labor has been the sentence in one case, while in another but three months' confinement, showing evidently that the French judges are puzzled to reconcile the temptation of the law on the one hand with its severity on the other.

There have been established recently in France asylums for children, somewhat upon the plan of our infant schools. Their object is in some degree primary instruction, but chiefly to afford suitable care, during the day, to the young children of poor parents, compelled to leave their homes for their daily subsistence. The government allows them annually three hundred thousand francs from the public budget of instruction. Private benevolence supplies the remainder. Their tendency is to prevent the causes which, among the destitute, lead to the abandonment of their infants, by providing them with a home during those hours when their parents are compelled to desert them. The parents are required to send them with clean face and hands, unbroken garments, and their food for the day. Upon arrival, an inspection takes place, to see whether these conditions have been fulfilled. They are taught music and other lessons suitable to their years, but no exercise is allowed to continue over ten minutes, for fear of fatigue. Religious education is attended to, and in no case is corporal punishment allowed. For the sleepy a bed is provided. There are about thirty of these asylums in Paris, re-

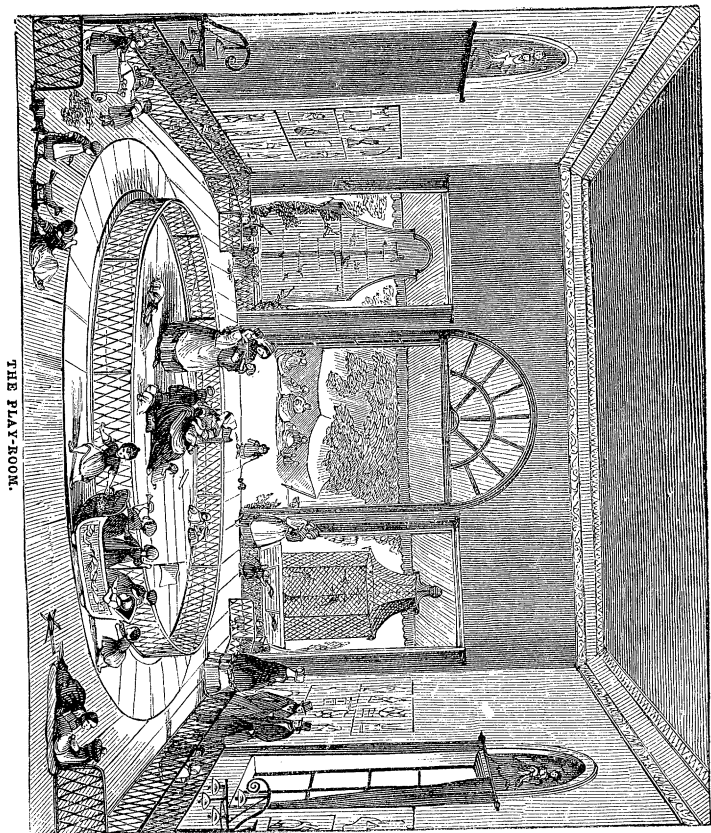


THE CRADLE-ROOM.

ceiving annually nearly ten thousand infants, from the ages of two to seven years.

The "*crèches modèles*," or public cribs of Paris, bid fair to do much to counteract the evil tendencies of the foundling hospitals. The home of every child should be the family; but as many families are incapable of providing a home, and more, from vice, furnish only a school of evil, it is well for society that it should provide an asylum for one and the means of escape for the other; consequently, for the children of households like those of the destitute and vicious of Paris, these model nurseries are a special providence. The mother pays two cents a day for the use of a cradle, and engages either to nurse her child herself or provide its food. The children have every facility allotted them for their amusement and instruction, so far as their tender years admit. They can be deposited as early as half past five o'clock in the morning, and remain until eight o'clock in the evening. The cradles are all uniform in make, clean, and even tasteful in their arrangements. Each day a physician calls to assure himself of the health of these diurnal orphans, and to see that all proper sanitary regulations are enforced. Sisters of charity have general charge of the establishments; under the care of the lady managers of the infant asylums. Mothers applying for admittance for their babes must justify their poverty or necessity for going out to daily labor.

It requires a certain education of nurses, independent of all parental or benevolent volition, to endure with complacency the noise of the children of an ordinary family let loose for fun and frolic. What, then, must be the juvenile uproar in one of these establishments, where each infant is encouraged to use its French tongue, with any accompaniment of toy or instrument it may chance to possess, at its own discretion! However, it is a children's paradise, and they are right to use their



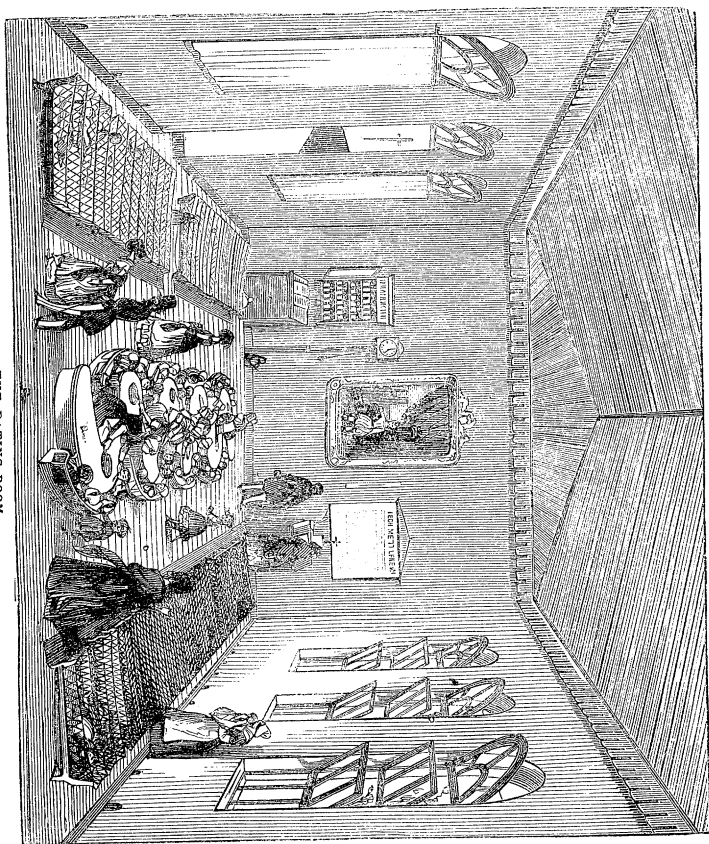
THE PLAY-ROOM.

tiny lungs in joyous uproar. Just look in upon the play-hall, and see if these sprouts of poverty have not cause to be envied by the twigs of many rich households! They are as merry as larks, and as happy as innocence and kind care can make them.

The suckling department is quieter, for the infants in general sleep the day through. If they awake, a faint cry announces some simple want, which provided for, they go off to sleep again. I dare not say so much for the next room, which contains those who have attained the mature age of between twelve and twenty-four months, and are supposed to require something more substantial in the way of diet than maternal milk. The beds are models of grace and neatness in their way; they are intended for the "naps" which that condition of infancy requires, occupying, to the comfort of their nurses, some hours of the day. When not thus peacefully employed, they are engaged in feasting, and the clatter of metallic spoons upon the firm wood of their table announces either that their sufficiency is satisfied, or, like little Oliver, they wish for "more." Of course, their standard of education is not as yet very elevated, being limited to some simple devotions and attempts at vocal harmony or uniformity of noise, by way of diversifying the medley of sounds.

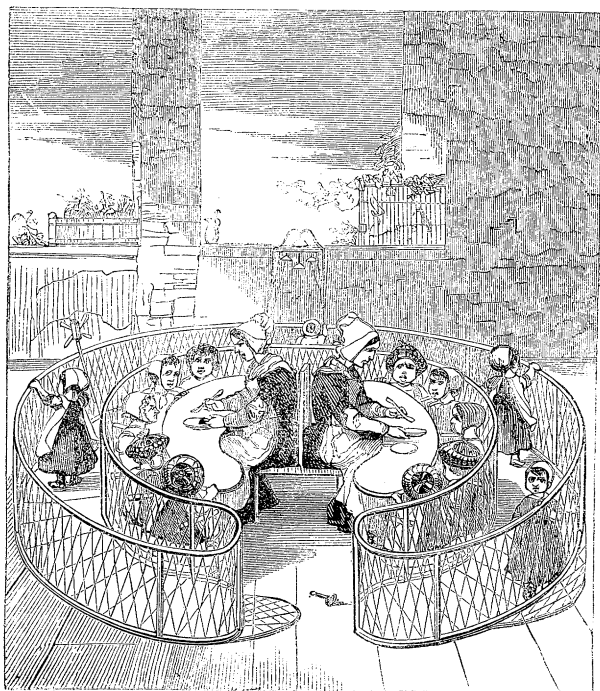
Paris possesses twenty-four of these philanthropic mangers, the utility of which, when rightly conducted, for the classes for which they are intended, can not be exaggerated. They cost nearly eighty-five thousand francs per annum, of which the poor parents contribute some nineteen thousand.

Connected in some degree with the institutions we have mentioned is the class of nurses, of which the Parisian type is remarkable for its jocund proportions and coarse features. They are required to possess certificates from the mayors of their respective villages that they are married women of good



THE EATING-ROOM.

report. In general, they are too ready to neglect their own offspring for the sake of the pittance to be gained as a private or public nurse. By a policy at first sight not very promising, they seek engagements in their worst apparel, believing that the parents whose necessities require their services will not allow them long to suckle their infants in their own ragged and filthy clothes. This speculation of poverty generally turns to their advantage, and they are enabled to return to their country homes reclad at the expense of their employers to await the birth of a new infant, which shall give them



THE TABLE.

again the coveted opportunity of going to Paris on a similar adventure.

There are regular offices for nurses, where they remain waiting engagements. Fifty or more, with their babies, while seeking employment, are shut up in small, dirty chambers, where neither light nor air is abundant. Their food, too, during this probation, owing to their parsimony, is of the meanest description, consisting of soups at two sous the porringer, wine at three sous the bottle, with other aliment at similar prices. A more vulgar and mercenary race of females than that to which, by the false customs of French parents, their infants are intrusted during the most susceptible period of their lives, it would be difficult for the world elsewhere to produce, excepting, perhaps, the female managers of these bureaux, who, perhaps, have secured their positions and clientage from being formerly of the shrewdest and most mercenary of the race themselves. It requires the eloquence of a new Jean Jacques Rousseau to re-awaken Parisian mothers once more to the duty and pleasure of fulfilling the natural laws of maternity, and preserving their offspring from the tender mercies of these harpies.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WIDOWS OF THE DEVIL.

(Partly from the French of Eugène Guinot.)

A DROLL title, without doubt, but none the less true, gentle reader mine, as you will soon perceive. I do not mean either those widows who, before they were such, affect to think all husbands devils, and after they become so, seek to persuade the world, by the depth of their mourning and the eloquence of epitaphs, that their departed lords were saints, when indeed, if the truth were known, they were simply martyrs; but I do mean another class of women common every where, and playing the very deuce with sons and husbands out of pure taste for deviltry. Who, then, can be so correctly called "widows of the devil" as those who, bestowing themselves upon no flesh and blood husbands, early join themselves in wedlock to a master that allows them a few days' revelry at the expense of never-ending sorrow? If their mischief were confined to their own reckless selves, we might remonstrate, pity, and weep; but as it extends through all circles, one resource to arrest its progress is to daguerreotype a few of its phases, not only as a warning to the "widows" themselves to beware in the outset how they give ear to the proposals of the Evil One, but to any son of woman how he gives ear to them.

As Paris is the city in which their brief triumph is the most complete, and their fall, owing to its graduated scale of morals, the slowest and least hopeless, I select it as the scene of my pictures; for what is true in that paradise of fools becomes doubly true elsewhere.

In seeing pass before you those beautiful butterflies—those seductive females who attach themselves to society only by its lien of flowers—at once lovely and frail, do you not ever ask yourself whither go they, and what will one day become of them? Leaving to others domestic felicity and regular habits, quiet virtues and hidden vices, they sport upon the wings of chance without check, without regard to appearance, showing with equal frankness all that they have of good and all that they do of evil. Their sole mission is joy for the moment; not that inward joy that springs from a good conscience, but that sensuous happiness which forgets all deeper and truer emotion in finding its caprices met, and its physical frivolities and grosser passions gratified.

If there be any happiness whose essence is solely of earth, it is theirs. Any element of a purer and more spiritual nature would be as unwelcome to them as a skeleton at a feast. To feel, and not to think, is their creed; the body, and not the spirit, is their principle. While they remain young and full of health, their life flows on easily and gladsome. They find time only to float on the breath of a fantasy or the sea of pleasure, whose soft murmurs at once invite and caress them. The thought of a to-morrow never crosses the path of to-day. Each hour gives birth to new schemes of pleasure—new sacrifices of their future for the joy of the present. The exhausted hero of one love disappears but to be replaced by the fuller purse or more comely person of another. Thus they pass on, faithless to others, faithless to their own souls, deriding, in their dream of youth, all that is serious and good, and faithful only to their fickle loves, their transient pleasures, their debasing luxuries, their empty worldliness, and all the vanities which fill and rule the head and heart of a female devotee of amusement.

Solomon admits that there is a time to dance; but one should

not dance unless one knows when and how to stop. On some fine day, youth begins to fade. A gray hair, a wrinkle, or a twinge, not of conscience, but of body, announce its coming adieu. Like the worm-hole in the ripe fruit, they tell of hidden decay with exaggerated meaning. Hardly, however, is the discovery made, before all the graces and comeliness on which pleasure reposed find their premature draught on decay and decrepitude promptly honored. Then, when youth and beauty have passed away, when the transitory loves and their golden showers have likewise disappeared, what becomes of those females who live but to please or be pleased through the medium of the senses, and who, in living thus, expend both their revenues and capital?

Let two retired gentlemen of the world, of a certain age, say from fifty to sixty years, who are seated in the Tuileries garden, explain to us the enigma. They have been conversing over the events of their youth, and naturally have fallen into a philosophical mood; for there were many circumstances in the lives of both, though in a different way, which led them to be serious.

"What becomes of them," asked the elder, but best preserved of the two—"of those queens dethroned by time, and where can I find them? Tell me, for you should know."

"I know nothing about it," replied his companion, with a somewhat testy tone, as if the question brought back some memories which he would feign have drowned in Lethe. "I know absolutely nothing about it, my dear Eugene; why do you ask such a question?"

Both remained silent for a few minutes, when the younger again spoke.

"Forgive me, Eugene, I spoke too hastily. I will do penance by recounting a history which will answer your question perfectly, though the follies of one's youth—I should say

more honestly the vices—are not the most agreeable reminiscences for one's age.

“You have always been, as I see you now, a grave, quiet man, and a stranger to those passions which beget folly and regret. I, on the contrary, have had a youth full of activity and adventure. Soon after quitting college, my uncle died, leaving me rich enough to follow my own tastes. I bade adieu to the country, and came to Paris, where I found Robert, my old classmate of Saint Barbe. There was that likeness between us that made our friendship solid and sure, and yet sufficient difference of wit and character to keep it ever fresh and pleasant. We were both free, full of health, well formed, well educated as the world goes, and with plenty of the sinews of pleasure in the shape of current coin. What was there, then, to prevent our success in the field of fashion of Paris?

“Absolutely nothing but our own modesty, and that soon vanished. Our debûts were signalized by numerous successes, for youth, fortune, beauty, leisure, and the inclination to taste the forbidden fruit, command nowhere a higher premium than at Paris.

“Nothing resisted us—at all events, long. It is true that we attacked only those citadels that armed themselves but to provoke assault. In the career of agreeable and easy adventures, Robert, I must confess, excelled me greatly. I soon learned to consider him my master. He was a veritable hero of pleasure; irresistible in attack, superb in triumph. He was known every where under the soubriquet of ‘The Devil,’ on account of his prowess. The polite and frivolous world in which we lived called him ‘Robert le Diable,’ and it was not without an emotion of joy that he one day found that Scribe and Meyerbeer had made him the hero of their celebrated opera of that name. We ran on thus for twenty years, thoughtlessly

and wicked, as you may believe, and might have done no better to this day, had not Providence interposed sundry infirmities, the distaste of satiety, or incapacity, to restore us to our sober senses. One or all combined helped to mend our morals. Robert owned, at sixty leagues from Paris, the estate of Margillac, a beautiful spot, with delightful gardens, a fine park, and picturesque environs. It was there that we both retired to recruit our exhausted energies, and gracefully terminate our career. We had good books, good wines, and laughable souvenirs; for, although our strength had waned, our tastes remained pretty much as when we first commenced 'life.' How many pleasant hours we passed in resuscitating the Past! Robert had one fixed idea. He constantly figured to himself that all the women he once had loved raised to him a perpetual altar in their hearts. It was under the impulse of this flattering belief that he made his will last winter, when attacked with an illness that finally closed his eyes. 'My dear Oscar,' said he to me, 'I make you my executor. I leave you the estate of Margillac; the rest of my property goes to my nephews, except the sum of one hundred thousand francs, which I charge you with distributing among my "widows."' He thus called the frail partners of his tender passions, so that, as you perceive, they were doubly the widows of the devil.

"'Among those unfortunate women who contributed so much to my career of folly,' he went on to say, 'there are ten that I wish particularly remembered. Here are their names written in this album: Athenais, Colombe, Antonia, Susanne, Flora, Olympe, Armide, Arthemise, and Rosalba. You have known them all, and you will find at the end of their names all the details which my memory can at present gather. I wish to leave to each of these females a memorial of my friendship, and to recompense them, for the last time, for the

love they have had for me, and the souvenirs which they have preserved of me. To each of them I formerly gave my portrait: the legacy is to be distributed among those who have preserved this image, and can show it to you. If any are dead, or if some have forgotten me or lost my portrait, then their portion is to revert to the others. Such is, my dear Oscar, the business that devolves upon you. I am sure you will fulfill it conscientiously; but, as I do not wish to abuse your zeal and devotion, I require only three months of researches; after that the money is to revert to my heirs.'

"Two days after giving me these instructions, Robert died. Faithful to the promise I made him, and furnished with the one hundred thousand francs, I came to Paris to seek the legatees. For three weeks I have sought every where, without finding a trace of one of those females. Judge, then, how apropos, and yet how annoying, was your question. It is twenty years since I put foot in Paris, and I find myself in an unknown land. I lose myself daily, and, to tell the truth, I do not know to whom to address myself to learn where I can find a single one of those women that poor Robert flattered himself still remember him."

At this moment, M. Oscar Palémon having finished speaking, a withered, wrinkled, and black hand extended itself toward him. It was the ragged and hag-like letter of chairs, who came to demand the two sous her due.

"Will you have some change, my dear Palémon?" said Eugene Benoit.

"Monsieur Palémon," repeated the old crone; "that is a name I have heard before."

"No doubt, good woman," with a disdainful smile, replied the testamentary executor of Robert.

"Eh! eh!" continued the old woman, "he would not have had cause to blush before you, my fine sir. He was a some-

body in his time, and he must have been something more than a dandy who was flattered with the particular acquaintance of Rosalba Delorme."

"What! can you be she? Then I have found one!" exclaimed Monsieur Palémon. "You, then, are Rosalba Delorme, that pretty little blonde?"

"Yes, sir, I was a blonde, unfortunately; for the blondes last a less time than the brunettes. If I had been a brunette, I should have lasted three or four years longer, and not have been reduced as you see me. I am now seeking my fortune where I have lost my beauty. I had decided to economize against old age, and there was a kinsman who had promised to make me rich on his return from St. Petersburg, where he had gone to receive a legacy; but, when he returned, it was no longer so: I was faded, although but twenty-nine. The brunettes hold good to thirty and upward. Ah! why was not I born a brunette!" The old woman would have gone on interminably in regretting her beauty and not her follies, had not Palémon interrupted her.

"So you recall my name, and I remember you as well as if I had seen you only yesterday. We were not much acquainted either. It was more through one of my friends, who knew you well, and whom you can not have forgotten—Robert, called the Devil."

"Robert the Devil—that is a play."

"Yes, but it was also a handsome young man who adored you, and you no less him."

"It is quite possible. I have a confused idea; but there were so many, that, to remember them all, one must have the memory of an angel."

"Robert gave you his portrait."

"Ah! I have had so many portraits; but now there is not one left. When one finds herself in distress, as you can con-

ceive, they go very quickly to the pawnbroker's. Mine went, with my jewels and dresses, one after another. But you make me talk, and during this time there goes off a gentleman who has not paid me for his chair."

She hobbled in pursuit of the delinquent, while M. Palémon got up, exclaiming,

"Let us go; the commencement of my researches is not very auspicious. Look! already one name erased from my list, and ten thousand francs to divide among the other legatees of Robert."

An hour after this rencounter, M. Palémon, on going home, found a letter which contained the following invitation:

"Madame the Baroness of Firsch requests M. Oscar Palémon to do her the honor to visit her on the evening of the 30th of April."

"Who is this baroness? Where did she know me? On what account am I invited? Why is it that she sends me an invitation only this morning for this evening? Generally they are sent several days in advance. A baroness should know the usages of society better. But never mind; I have come to Paris to fulfill a duty, and perhaps at the baroness's I shall meet some elegant of my date who can put me upon the track of those I seek."

M. Palémon, at nine o'clock, complied with the invitation. The house looked mean; the staircase was badly lighted; the apartment, although large, was smoky and in disorder. The furniture dated from the Empire; the curtains were spoiled, and the gilding had lost its brilliancy. In an antechamber, a servant in blue livery, stained with oil, opened the door of the saloon, and announced, in a cracked voice, M. Palémon.

Four groups were seated around four gambling-tables. A lady of not less than middle age, tall, and with an imposing air, approached M. Palémon, and thanked him for having ac-

cepted her invitation. She then took him by the arm, conducted him to a recess near a window, made him take a seat, and said to him, with the kindest manner imaginable,

"I receive only gentlemen of fashion and pretty women. I thought that my saloon would be agreeable to you, if, as I suppose, you have preserved your old tastes and habits."

"How is this, Madame?" replied Palémon, astonished; "have I, then, had the honor formerly of your acquaintance?"

"Certainly; and I am charmed to find your name upon the list of the new arrivals at Paris."

"Indeed! I did not know that such a list was published."

"They do not publish it; I obtained it privately."

"And you, then, had the goodness to recollect me?"

"Yes, surely. You have one of those names that one does not soon forget, and which necessarily strike one, when again heard."

"Very flattering this, Madame the Baroness," replied M. Palémon, who thought himself obliged to rise and salute her for this compliment; "but," added he, "I ought to confess that my memory is less happy, and I am the more confused as well as surprised, for, without speaking of the graces of your person, you have also one of those names which command the memory."

"It is, perhaps, because I have not always borne this name," said the baroness, laughing. "Do you not remember Olympe Dujardin?"

"Ah!" exclaimed M. Palémon, "a lucky day! Your name is written upon my tablets, Madame, and you are one of the persons that I desire the most to see in visiting Paris. I am enchanted to find you in a brilliant and aristocratic position. A marriage, without doubt? You well merit that! But how is it that I did not recognize you at once? You are not changed in the least."

"You find, then—" replied the baroness, affectedly; "yes, they do say I am still passable. It is not every woman that can say that at my age. Hold! you remember the little Antonia, who had formerly some reputation in the world, and who knew so well how to ruin the English?"

"Antonia! why she is on my list."

"There she is; that enormous lady in a blue hat, seated near the chimney. Now she is called Madame Outremer. The young person at her side is her niece. I will present you."

Madame Outremer gave M. Palémon a warm reception. "I love my old friends," said she; "my niece does also. She is pretty, and well brought up, and delights in the society of mature men. We are delighted to receive you."

M. Palémon led the conversation toward Robert. At first neither the baroness nor Madame Outremer recollected him; but, by force of associations, the memory of the two ladies gradually awakened. Neither, however, had preserved the precious portrait.

Just then the door of the saloon was opened. An agent of the police, followed by his guards, entered, and placed sentinels so as to prevent the escape of any one. The cards were seized in the name of the law, and each of the players were obliged to give their names to await a civil process. This scene did not pass without lively expostulations. The baroness was furious.

"I know from whom has come this blow," said she to M. Palémon, who was thunderstruck at the denouement: "I have been denounced by a woman who was my rival formerly, and is now my enemy, and who has come to live in this house, to be the better able to spy me. They have rightly told me that she was in the pay of the police, and I was weak not to believe them. Oh! I will unmask her now, and all the

world shall know that Arthemise Muller is a spy—a vile informer.”

“Arthemise Muller! Still another one of those that I seek,” said M. Palémon.

The *procès-verbal* being finished, the guests of the baroness had permission to retire, with the prospect of appearing as witnesses in a trial before the police court.

Moved by a scene which had finished a day so full of meetings, M. Palémon went home with a headache. To distract his mind, he sent to a library for a new novel.

It was a dirty octavo, which had been thumbed by thousands of fingers; one of those books that the women of the world, delicate and distinguished, admit to their firesides after they have passed through the garret, antechamber, porter's lodge, barracks, and divers other localities equally unfashionable; for, at Paris, no one buys books—they hire them. All classes of society are inscribed upon the registers of circulating libraries. The same volume goes from the grisette to the countess, from the valet to the dandy, and so on. M. Palémon opened the book and commenced reading, but the first pages were so stupid that they set him to gaping. He was about to close the volume, when, by chance, he saw his own name heading a chapter thus: “Where the reader will make acquaintance with a new personage, M. Oscar Palémon.”

Was it by chance that the author had used these two names? Let us see. Not at all; it is a true portrait. The Palémon of the romance is one who led a rakish life at Paris twenty years since, and, that there should be no doubt as to his identity, the author has complacently described his figure, habits, and character, and has placed him in an historical intrigue, of which the mysterious details have not yet been noised abroad. Who, then, could be the romancer who knew M. Palémon so well, and his most private adventures? The author was a woman, and her name was Madame Bougival.

M. Palémon consulted his excellent memory, but it was in vain that he ran over every name of his past or present acquaintance. He could find no clew in his own reminiscences.

"It is necessary that I trace this mystery out," said he to himself, "and perhaps to make a complaint to the procureur of the Emperor, for it can not be permitted surely to print, without permission, the life of an honest man, and to make him the hero of a romance."

Saying this, M. Palémon grasped his hat, threw on his cloak, called a coach, and drove in great haste to the publisher of the novel, who gave him, without hesitation, the address of the author.

A quarter of an hour after, he was mounting the narrow and dirty staircase which led to the sixth story of a house in the Faubourg St. Denis. He rang three times, and waited some ten minutes before the door of the apartment was opened. He then found himself in the presence of a woman of fifty years of age, fat and short, of a smoky tint, enveloped in an old merino dressing-gown, and her disordered hair crowned with a turban of red-checked silk, somewhat after the fashion of an African washerwoman.

"Madame Bougival, if you please?"

"At your service, sir."

There was no mistaking the woman of letters. Her right hand, which held the door half closed, was deeply marked with ink, while to answer her visitor she had been obliged to take a pen from her mouth, which she placed behind her ear.

"Enter, sir," said Madame Bougival, "and excuse me if I make you wait; but I have just commenced a sentence, and I wish to finish it before I lose the idea. Not that way, sir; that's the kitchen: this door, I beg of you; enter my study."

This study served at the same time for a saloon, dining-room, and bed-chamber. The bed was half hid behind a torn

curtain. The principal article of furniture was an immense table, covered with all sorts of articles pell-mell, such as books, paper, corsets, ink-stand, a bottle of wine, a comb, glasses, pens, petticoats, plates, and a chaos of manuscript and notes.

"I beg you to be seated, sir," said the woman of letters, at the same moment giving the example by plunging herself into a vast arm-chair before her desk.

M. Palémon desired nothing better than to gain a little time, but the three chairs which constituted the stock of sitting-furniture were already occupied; the first by a cat, the second by the fragments of a salad, and the third by a pair of stockings and a hair-brush.

Madame Bougival observed his embarrassment, and said to the cat, "Get down, Silvio; make room for the gentleman."

Silvio rose slowly up, lazily stretched herself, and then jumped from the chair on to the table, walked and purred a while amid the general chaos, and finally made a bed of her mistress's corsets.

"Now that you are seated, sir," continued the blue-stock-
ing, "will you inform me what has procured me the honor of this interview?"

"Madame, I am here on account of a romance."

"Monsieur is a publisher?"

"No, Madame."

"An editor, perhaps?"

"No more. This is the fact: I have read your romance."

"Which?"

"That which is called 'Nights and Festivities.'"

"It is one of my best."

"In this romance there is a character—"

"There are thirty-two, sir, and all well drawn, as I dare to say. The characters are a little spread out, and the events in

the lives of each given with particular detail—all true, sir, too. Some of the catastrophes would make you shed every tear in your body, if you have two ounces of sensibility.”

“Yes, yes. I render homage to the merits of your work; but the character of whom I wish particularly to speak to you is called Oscar Palémon.”

“Ah! what a laughable chap—droll as Punch—an amiable vagabond. Do you use this, sir?” added the lady, pushing toward her visitor a large snuff-box of black horn, from which she had just taken a copious pinch of tobacco.

“Willingly, Madame, I thank you. But let us return, if you please, to this Oscar Palémon.”

“The character strikes you—is it not so? There is great truth in it. I drew it after nature. That man lived, and I knew him.”

“I believe it. He still lives.”

“Do you know him?”

“Very well indeed—it is myself.”

“Indeed! Is that true? Are you the little Oscar? Minerva! it can’t be. What a pity! What a scamp is this Time, to so derange us! But, on looking more closely, I recognize something of you; and in me do you see nothing familiar? When I knew you they called me Athenais Babichard.”

“What! Athenais, the queen of our balls and of our suppers, the never-tiring, graceful dancer, the joyous carouser, who could swallow so lightly three bottles of Champagne at a sitting?”

“She is before your eyes. But those festive nights are passed. Now I have adopted temperance and incognito. I am Madame Bougival, a writer of romances, of manners, and of books of education for young children.”

M. Palémon did not again allude to the suppers. Athenais Babichard a woman of letters! It was indeed droll, but not

altogether new. We have had several of the same species before.

"But," objected M. Palémon, "since you have deigned to preserve for me a place in your memoir, you have still more reason to preserve the memory of Robert and his likeness."

"Robert," replied the literary female; "where do you find this Robert?"

Here, as every where else, the souvenir was effaced, and the portrait lost.

A few days after, M. Palémon had another rencontre. He went to the theatre. In retiring, he talked with the woman who waited upon the boxes and gave him his coat. What was his surprise when he recognized in this poor decrepit being an actress once celebrated for her beauty and her wit!

It was Susannah, the old actress of the Variétés—Susannah, who had always worn such rich dresses, and who excelled in comedy—Susannah, the idol of the side scenes and the passion of the orchestra. No other actress had contributed more than she to the fortune of the theatre. Her salary had been a thousand crowns, which she did not receive, but, on the contrary, she willingly paid for the privilege to show herself upon the stage. Each month her fines for non-attendance were not less than five or six hundred francs, which those who had caused her to miss the rehearsal or play gladly paid. But Susannah faded, and she passed from among the actresses to the figurantes, and finally was but too happy to be allowed to remain about the theatre in the humble situation in which Palémon had found her.

Susannah neither remembered Robert nor his portrait. The memory of Arthemise Muller, the police spy, was equally frail. Thus six names were successively erased from his list.

It occurred to M. Palémon that the most beautiful, most opulent, and most loved of the widows of Robert was Mademoi-

selle Colombe, who, in her days of splendor, lived in a magnificent apartment in the Rue de Provence. He hastened there and inquired,

"Have you here a young person called Mademoiselle Colombe? When I say young, I mean—no, it was twenty-five years since. I forget: excuse me. She occupied the entresol."

"In the entresol," replied the porter, "we have M. Roland, the oldest lodger in the house. He has lived there for twenty years."

"Perhaps this gentleman can give me some information."

M. Palémon hurried up the staircase, knocked, and found M. Roland at home. When he had explained the object of his visit, he replied,

"Ah! sir, you recall a very agreeable souvenir. Yes, truly, I replaced in this apartment a very amiable person, who spoke often of her. She had become poor—that is to say, her revenues had fallen off, and she was obliged to sell her furniture and give up this apartment. She resigned herself to her losses with so much grace that I was touched. I went to see her several times in her new lodgings—quite humble, I can assure you—in the Rue Montmartre; but it is many years since I have seen her. You say that she is to receive a legacy. I heartily hope you will find her, as she must be greatly in need."

M. Palémon took the number of her lodgings from M. Roland, and hastened to the Rue Montmartre. There he found, not the woman he sought, but a reminiscence of her in the memory of the venerable porter.

"She was a good girl, sir; always laughing, although it was not always that she had cause; liberal in her gifts, though her purse was often empty. She stopped here just five years; then she left because the proprietor seized her furniture for the six months' rent due him."

With some farther instructions, M. Palémon pursued his search. He traced her to a wretched habitation in one of the vilest parts of the city, where she had remained three years. Thence his clew led him to a filthy garret in a still worse house, near to the corn-market. At the end of a foul and obscure entry there was a dilapidated door, to be seen only by the light of heaven through a hole in the roof. Upon this door was written,

“Madame Pigoche, magician.”

M. Palémon knocked. The door, half closed, opened to the slight force he used, and he found himself in the presence of an old crone, buried, rather than clothed, in the fragments of theatrical garments, to which age had lent an overpowering odor.

Never had the art of Mademoiselle Lenormand been exercised in a lodging so miserable and by so ragged a sorceress.

“Does Monsieur wish that I shall tell his fortune?” asked the old woman, with a grave air.

“No, Madame, I have not come to consult your cards.”

“What, then, do you wish?”

“It is in regard to a Mademoiselle Colombe whom I am very desirous to find.”

“Colombe!” exclaimed the sybil, with emotion; “you ask for poor Colombe?”

“Yes, Madame; does she not lodge here?”

“She sleeps in the cemetery, sir.”

“Dead?”

“A long time ago. She died here, on this spot where you are. It astonishes you, does it not, that a woman, after having been so brilliant, so rich, so petted, should end her days in such a hole? Yes, it is your thought; I see it in your eyes. You can hide nothing from me. I read the past as well as the future. You knew Colombe when she was young and beau-

tiful. She then inhabited an apartment furnished like the palace of a queen. She owned diamonds, horses, and carriages. She threw away money by handfuls. You knew all that, and you can not understand how she could come here to die. It is, nevertheless, the history of more than one. And I, also, such as you now see me, I have lived in the same way ; I have been as young, pretty, rich, and brilliant as Colombe."

"You are her sister, perhaps?"

"No, sir, I was only her friend—her best friend. Ah!" she said, drawing a deep sigh, more in regret at the pleasures passed than in penitence, "how many follies have we enjoyed together! It was the good time then. We were but twenty years old, as says the song. But, unfortunately, this could not last always. Troubles came, and then age; every thing changes with us poor women, who live only on what Nature has lent us. The commencement is always sweet, but the end bitter. At first, lovers follow us; later, they wait for us; and then we must go and seek them. Such was the history of this poor Colombe. When she was wholly abandoned, and misery overwhelmed her, she became crazed, and put an end to herself."

"A suicide!" cried M. Palémon, struck with horror.

"Yes, sir, with four sous' worth of charcoal—her last four sous, three of which she borrowed of me, without telling me what she wished to do—the poor creature! It was necessary to break down the door in the presence of a police agent. They found her there stiff—dead. I can still see her. In order to burn the charcoal, she made use of this furnace, which I have preserved, and upon which I make my coffee every morning in memory of her."

"Poor Colombe! No one, then, took pity upon thy distress?"

"And whom would you have succor her? Her old lovers,

perhaps? Indeed! Men, you see, are all—but you are one, and I stop. Men, while they are in love, are stupid dwarfs, who have nothing in them; geese, that one can pluck at will. But when the fit is passed, they are callous, with hearts like stone. They forget all that has been done for them, and leave us to die of hunger without bestowing upon us the charity of a sous. Colombe more than once spoke to her old friends who swam in opulence. All refused the smallest pittance. I was so poor myself that I could not aid her.”

“And her sister, that I saw so beautiful and triumphant, what has become of her?”

“Flora? Do not speak of her; she has been still more miserable. When time stole her charms, she took up trading in articles of toilette. Her business was with women of fashion, who, like ourselves, had led a life of gallantry, but, unlike ourselves, had possessed hypocrisy enough to preserve their reputation. The male world does not bid them adieu because they are rich, and thus they contrive to divide their hours between intrigues, lace, finery, and all else that goes to repair the ravages of time on flesh. But this business is not all profit or pleasure. Such patrons give more promises than money. Victimized by numerous failures, Flora, to save herself, was tempted to dishonesty. A Cashmere shawl had been intrusted to her for sale. She sold it, and kept the money. The police condemned her to six years’ imprisonment. After this there was no more business for her. On leaving prison, Flora, without resources, lost, faded, fell lower than ever. She lived a vagabond life, and finished by associating with a criminal by profession. Caught in robbery, she was again brought before the court, and condemned to seven years’ hard labor, and to be exposed on a scaffold. Yes, I have seen my unhappy friend tied to a gallows—she whom I have so often seen so brilliant in her carriage and her box at the

Opera, attended by those fine gentlemen who to-day are peers of France. Heaven had pity on her at the end of a year, and sent her a disease which soon took her off."

"All this is very sad," said M. Palémon, who had many reasons for feeling melancholy as he recalled his career and those of these unhappy girls. "But you, Madame, who were the friend of these sisters, what is your name?"

"Now, as you read upon my door, I am called Madame Pigoche, the name of the only man that I ever loved. Formerly I was called Rosine de Lélécour; that was more poetical—"

"Rosine Lélécour! You are on my list," said M. Palémon, opening his pocket-book.

"It is possible," tranquilly replied the sybil.

"Do you remember me?"

"No, sir, I do not; but that is no offense. You have not recognized me; and if I am changed, on your side you have not, I judge, the pretension to be the same as you were in your spring-time."

"It does not concern me, but a friend called Robert."

"I do not remember that name either, which is not astonishing, so many names have passed through my head. Ah me! Yes, and so many bank-notes have passed through my hands, and now not one remains, alas! If one could keep what they gained, Colombe and Flora would have lived, and we should have been fine ladies to-day, as we were all three great sinners in our youth. If you knew us, you will recollect, perhaps, that we were always together, and they called us the three graces. You see, now, what is left."

"There is something which can aid you to recall Robert."

"What is it? Tell me, if you please."

"His portrait, which he gave you."

"He gave me, then, his portrait, the poor, dear man? Very

well; I have not kept it, nor any thing else. All went, in turn, to the pawnbroker's. Now I have no faces, except those upon my cards, which gain for me something in my decay. Come, sir, give me something, and we will know your fortune. We have talked enough about the past; let us talk some of the future."

"No, Madame, no; you have told me all I wished to know; but it is just that I should pay you the same as if you had told my fate."

M. Palémon drew from his purse a gold coin, which he put into the hand of the sybil. It was a long while since she had seen so much, and her face glistened with joy as she made her acknowledgments.

"This proof shall be the last," said M. Palémon, as he left the fortune-teller. "There still remains one widow, but it is useless to seek her."

The three months had expired. He had done all possible to fulfill the wishes of Robert. His conscience would now permit him to return to Margillac, and restore to the nephew of his friend the hundred thousand francs which had failed to reach their first destination.

While he was preparing to depart, a neighbor of Margillac wrote to him to request that he would take charge, on his return, of a roll of papers which would be given to him by M. Rondin, living at the Batignolles. M. Palémon took an omnibus and found the house.

"Monsieur is out," said the servant, "but you can speak to Madame."

M. Palémon caused himself to be announced, and entered the saloon, where he found the wife of M. Rondin and her daughter, a charming girl of sixteen. The old bachelor made his most graceful bow; then, approaching Madame Rondin, he uttered a cry of surprise and emotion.

"What is the matter, sir?" asked the lady, astonished at the effect she produced.

"Nothing, Madame, nothing. I will explain; but it would be better that we were alone," said he, glancing at the young lady.

"Leave us, Caroline," said Madame Rondin.

When Caroline had left, she said, "Now, sir, explain; what is the cause of your emotion?"

"What have you there upon your breast?"

"This medallion?"

"Yes, that portrait, which is that of my friend Robert, is it not—Jules Edward Florestan Robert, called the Devil?"

It was, indeed, the portrait so long sought. M. Palémon had before him the tenth of the names upon his tablet.

Madame Rondin told him how, after numerous adventures, she had made an honorable end by marrying M. Rondin. "My husband knows nothing of my former life, and I count upon your discretion," said she, as she finished her tale.

An hour after this scene, M. Palémon dined with Mr., Mrs., and Miss Rondin.

"This is an old friend of my brother's," said the wife, "and Caroline is a witness of the emotion with which he recalled the likeness of my poor Charles, who died so young."

"You have plenty of others," said the good M. Rondin, laughing. "My wife has a mania for portraits. She possesses three uncles, four brothers, and five cousins in bracelets, brooches, and upon snuff-boxes."

M. Palémon could not listen to this conversation. He was looking attentively at the face of the young girl opposite him. Caroline was both modest and pretty. She had just left school, and had been well taught. After dinner, she played and sang with good taste. Her voice was sweet and strong. The old bachelor was in ecstasies, and, when he bade adieu to the fam-

